The Writing on the Wall:

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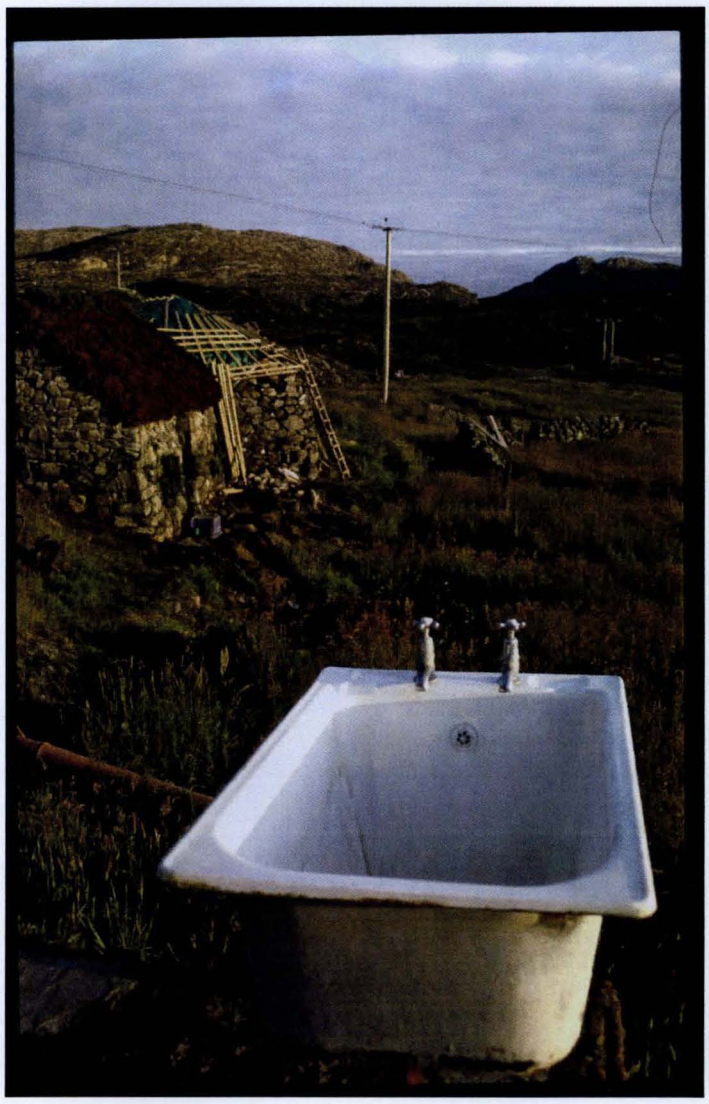
Children's meanings of land

in the Outer Hebrides at the beginning of the 21st Century



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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own work and does not replicate any other work.

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Signed.

ABSTRACT

In 1990 the United Nations Convention of the rights of the child recognised children as a minority group, social actors with a right to be heard. In parallel, interest in children's voices increased within academia. This research adds to current work within children's geographies, through an exploratory case study in the Outer Hebrides, Scotland, with a group of participants (6 to 12 years old). Based on a series of workshops, participants were invited to become artists-in-residence on the theme of land within their everyday lives.

This thesis set two substantive questions: what are participants' meanings of land in the Outer Hebrides and how do these meanings relate to current theories around human's relationship with land? Findings showed that meanings of land were not uniform though meanings embodied movement through daily lives, creating a sense of self and 'belonging' Participants were not controlled excessively by adult narratives of stranger-danger but by the physical topography, which mirrored many inhabitants' experiences. Participant's meanings of land are understood through two theories of human's relationship with land. First, Ingold's phenomenological concept of landscape as dwelling , recognising the influence of past generations (walking the land tending sheep), and more 'modern' activities, (watching soap operas at home). Second, Massey's concept of progressive sense of place, recognising the influence of wider social forces and explains an everyday land inhabited by a Bengal tiger.

This research has a number of original contributions. First, this research increases knowledge on an under researched part of the Scottish Islands around inhabitants everyday lives and land. Second, a third, and methodological, research question explored the debate: is doing research with children different from doing research with adults? Here I argue that pre-labelling any participants by social identities contradicts the bottom-up approach of participatory methodologies, as identities are multiple and are something we 'do' not 'have'. This final issues aims to address the narrow readership within children's geographies and persuade all researchers to no longer view the 'child' as 'other' to the adult and outside mainstream social research.

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To the memories of Iona Small & Berenice Currie

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

> Your children are not your children
> They are the sons and daughters of life's longing for itself.
> They come through you but not from you
> And though they are with you yet they belong not to you
> You may give them your love but not your thoughts
> For they have their own thoughts.
> *The Prophet* by Kahlil Gibran[1] (1972: 13, lines 4-6)

Children's rights: being social actors in their own lives

Interest in children's voices has increased over the past few decades in academia and the wider policy management arena. The question of whether children should be listened to became, in one sense, a moot point in 1990 when the United Nations (UN) Convention of the Rights of the Child was introduced and children's right to be heard, and to participate in decisions about matters that involve their lives, became a legal obligation. Interest in children's rights is not new, though in contrast to previous institutionalisation of children's rights, where the focus was on *protection* and *provision*, this Convention also recognises children as social actors and promotes *participation* of this group, in matters of importance to them (James, 1990). As a result, there has been an increasing call to recognise children as citizens of today, as well as the generation of tomorrow, with their own current needs rather than as tools for creating a future as envisaged by adults (Kincheloe, 2002).

The Convention redefined children as a minority rights group though as history shows, when a silenced body of individuals is given the right to a voice, it neither guarantees that these individuals will have the power to speak, nor that others would listen (Alderson, 2001; John, 2003). The silencing is not only due to lack of voices but also due to the structural processes that have kept them quiet (John, 2003). For example, previous legislation viewed children as property, while academic research regarded them as incompetent adults in need of socialisation (Brannen and O'Brien, 1996) that would transform 'them' from human becomings to human beings (Qvortrup, 1997). (The concept of the child as 'other' is deeply embedded within academia and wider society (Holloway and Valentine, 2000a; John, 2003).

[1] The first edition of the book was published in 1923.

Children, as a minority group, face similar issues as other silenced voices, such as questions around the true nature of participation in matters of importance in their lives. Until recently, academia has tended to marginalise children (Valentine, 2000; Prout, 2005). Today the question academia faces is not whether it should listen but how to listen and access the authentic voices within this social group. These questions have long been raised with other minority groups, and discussions within qualitative research emerged in the early 1990s (John, 2003) around the concept of 'voice' or 'voicing' (Lincoln, 2003). Voicing takes the view that minority groups do not always speak for themselves as the effects of their experience have been internalised such that they become silenced (Freire, 1983). So not only are these groups invisible but they are also not heard (hooks, 1997). The emphasis of this research paradigm is that 'voicing' is not about hearing what the underprivileged have to say, and acting as their advocate or speaking for or on behalf of them, but rather to develop methodologies on the basis of partnership, which create a power shift for the researcher as a gatherer of knowledge to that of a facilitator (Chambers, 2001; John, 2003). Interestingly, while the UN Convention on Children's Rights promotes *protection, provision* and *participation,* there is a 4th P missing from its discourse on what is required for children to become active members of any society: *power* (John, 1996, 2003).[2]

Being invited to Speak

One topic that children are held to have significant vested interest in is the global environment, and children are increasingly asked to participate in discussions of environmental matters (Hart, 1997). Ironically, this area of discussion also provides a clear example of the difference between being given a right to speak and being heard. During the Rio Summit in 1992, groups of children were promised an hour to speak and to present a week's deliberations on important global matters (one suggestion was cancelling Third World debt, a decade before Bob Geldolf). In reality, this group of speakers were given five minutes, the recording equipment didn't work and nobody turned up to listen to them, including the president of Norway who had initiated this event. In an attempt to find a voice, they tried to talk on the streets but were arrested for holding an illegal demonstration (Children of the World, 1994). Eventually the head of the UN Convention for Children's Rights spoke on this group's behalf and won a standing ovation. But she had not been asked to speak by any of the individuals that she represented (Roberts, 1998).

[2] Interestingly, the academic lawyer Lynn Hagger believes the Convention on the rights of the Child is not sufficient in her discussions around children's right to make decisions on their participation in medical research, and she draws on the 1998 Human Rights Act within British law (2001, 2002,)

Environment debates: Disconnection with the natural environment/place/ land(scape)

One main topic within environmental discussions, and frequently underpinning environmental education (Takano, 2004), is the concept that humans have become disconnected from their natural environment. The concept of disconnection from nature is also extended to an unattachment to place and has been interpreted in terms of the shift from rural to urban populations (Synder, 1998). Though not all authors share this view (cf. Jackson, 2002), an uneasiness about people's disconnection from nature and place has been noted by various authors (cf. Ingold, 1993; Demeritt, 2002). This disconnection in environmental discourses is often directly tied to people's exploitative attitudes towards nature. Zencey proposes that people are ignorant of their natural surroundings and nature has become 'visual furniture' (1998:62). As a result people are less likely to have an interest in and care for their environment.

Various theories are posited about this disconnection from nature (an issue I have discussed in detail elsewhere (1996, 2000), though to aid clarity, a summary of the debates is presented here). Issues around humans' relationship with their natural environment is highly complex and continually contested within environmental ethics (Jickling, 1992; Callicot, 1994), and the main reasons presented can be placed into three broad categories. Firstly, the impact of Judeo-Christianity on environmental management, which is held to replace our spiritual connection with nature, with humanity's dominion over nature (White, 1968). Secondly, the Cartesian framework, which is critiqued by various writers across disciplines for separating object from subject, and mind from body, transformed nature from an organic being into a mechanical being, which profoundly influenced humanity's perception of nature and our relationships with it. Finally, the industrial revolution and the physical movement of populations from rural areas to cities, the subsequent development of a capitalist global market economy, which has led to mass need and consumption (Hollands, 1998). (Interestingly these three main reasons also mirror discussions around how the child and childhood have been constructed over time, as discussed in Chapter Two.). The last reason also links a disconnection of people from their land, the focus of an earlier piece of research in Papua New Guinea (1996).

A sense of connection is argued as essential in encouraging sustainable practices (Higgins, 2001), though the negative impact is viewed not only on humankind and its environment but also on humans' well-being and identity. Authors such as Mortlock (1973) and Cooper (1991, 1994) propose a link between a positive sense of self, others and the environment.

This separation of people from their land is proposed to foster a longing to return to a natural environment (Bunce, 1994), which some extend to prove that there is a biological attachment between humans and nature (Wilson, 1993). One belief is that human DNA carries hereditary emotional affiliation (biophilia) with other organisms, which is passed on through generations, and is not replaced when humans move to cities (*ibid*). This is why humans still visit zoos and the wealthy buy aesthetically beautiful views for their homes (Wilson, 1995). Other writers extend this human need to human identity, which remains rooted in connections with our natural environment (Kellert, 1997), and is widespread across different cultures and traditions (Malpas, 1999). This connection with place/land is labelled 'topophilia' (Tuan, 1974). In contrast, Descola and Palsson suggest that globalisation does not erase such 'local' concerns but redefines them (1996).

The negative impact of the physical, emotional and spiritual disconnection from nature and place is discussed by various academic voices and the importance of 'rootedness' in human identity and 'well-being' is upheld (cf. Demeritt, 2002). Malpas views the structure of the mind to be tied to locality and spatiality, and identities as intricately and essentially place-bound (1996: 194), while Kahn suggest that places "represent connections between people and their common place, individuals and their group, or sources of individual or shared identity, rooting them in the social and cultural soils" (1996: 194). Some view this concept of connection to land to be literary middle-class conceit (James, 2001), though Maplas fundamentally disagrees (1999). Many authors discussing place and identity link the loss of 'rootedness' to a concept of 'homelessness'. Reulph views home as where your roots are, a centre of safety and security, a field of care and point of orientation (1976). Others argue that "mobility promotes an equally emphatic connection to a larger whole" (Cuthbertson *et al*, 1997), which is in line with the environmental maxim of 'think globally, act locally'. These authors believe that being in connection with different landscapes fosters a wider web of sense of place and creates a holistic notion of place. Zencey writes that the citizen of the *cosmo polis* is supposed to owe no allegiance to geographical territory but belong to the boundless world of ideas (1996). He believes this concept of humans' connection with land promotes the idea that being educated means being disconnected from your local environment.

Phenomenological work on 'rootedness' and 'sense of place' within cultural geography is influenced by the German philosopher Martin Heidegger and his notions of 'dwelling' and 'being in the world' (1993: 55). This notion of dwelling is linked to a sense of identity and existing in the world, and focuses on the interaction between humans and place, and the

concept of 'place as experience' is proposed (Basso, 1996; Jackson and Penrose, 1993; Kahn, 1996; Reulph 1986). This concept of place embodies multidimensional aspects – psychical, physical, cultural, historical and social (Casey, 1996: 31), which other, mainly Western, authors claim represents the relationship between land and indigenous peoples (Tuan, 1976; Fienup-Riordan, 1990; Hubert and Reeves, 1994; Basso, 1996; Thomson, 1996; Caulfield, 1997; Cuthbert *et al.*, 1997; Malpas, 1999).

Landscape/land meanings also raise questions about the relationship between people and place (Robertson *et al.*, 2003) and the concept is explored within this thesis. However, discussions around landscape within the current climate of debate would seem to be problematic. From its much more settled interpretation earlier, in the last century, voices from diverse backgrounds have seemingly muddied the waters, thus placing any firm statement about landscape meaning in contested ground (Crang, 1998). Within geography, Cresswell is highly critical of the term landscape and states that he prefers the term place since,

> "Place, unlike space, and landscape, permeates out everyday life and provides meaning in people's lives. Places are quite clearly lived. At the other extreme space has an analytical quality about it. Landscapes, on the other hand, does not have much space for temporality, for movement and flux and mundane practices. It is too much about the already accomplished and not enough about the processes of everyday lives." (2003: 24)

In contrast within anthropology, a concept of landscape has evolved that addresses Cresswell's criticisms in particular of the work by Bender and Winder (1999, 2004), O'Hanlon and Hirsch (1996) and Ingold (1993) that embody landscape as dwelling[3]. As Bender writes (1993: 1):

> Landscapes are created by people – through their experience and engagement with the world around them. They maybe close-grained, worked-upon- places or they maybe distance and half fantasised.

The importance of meanings of land with everyday lives is the focus of this thesis. My aim in maintaining this focus became a catalyst in shifting my original plan of three case studies that explored children's meanings of land within - 1) an art exhibition; 2) a museum display

[3] The previous discussions around the disconnection of humans with land are useful theoretically, though most are not based on empirical evidence but on long-term experience, insights from observations and intuitions (Takano, 2004). To recognise children's role as social actors in meaning making in their lives, there is a need to explore the empirical side of these discussions.

and; 3) within their everyday lives, to exploring only the third case study, as described later in this Chapter.

Purpose of the thesis

A review of the literature on landscape, land, place and space, which is discussed further in Chapter Two, highlights the constructed and contested nature of the natural environment (Burgess, 1986; Demeritt, 2002), place (Cosgrove, 1990; James *et al.*, 1998), and land. Among different authors, the concepts of landscape/land/place and space appear fluid and extend from a physical entity external from humans to a relationship, to a sense of identity, to the concept of 'being' human. Robertson *et al.* (2003: 32) state that this diverse literature raises more questions than those that can be answered on the nature of land and landscape and,

> "To define the concept there is wisdom in asking the landscape users to state their understanding of the concept .... From their perceptions may come the basis for a theory of landscape meaning grounded in the everyday experiences of the people who inhabit the land"

However, my thesis adopts an approach different from these researchers, towards exploring meanings of landscape/land. Robertson *et al.*'s research explores young people's perceptions of young people in Britain's East Anglia, though their definition of landscape was already preset within a questionnaire that had been developed from an earlier piece of research that had invited children to carry out quantitative grid surveying of the physical landscape. As such, the concept of landscape or land had already been predetermined by the methods adopted. In contrast, my thesis is based around a piece of empirical fieldwork that explores humans' connection with land, through a participatory approach where participants are invited to define and explore their own meanings of land. In this thesis, the concept of land, or landscape, is held to be both socially and materially constructed; while participants who hold the social identity of child are viewed as social actors, competent in meaning making, though the impact of wider social forces is acknowledged (Valentine, 2000). In carrying out research on the concept of land within the Scottish Highlands or Islands, there is a need to recognise that the notion of 'land' has a different historical background to England and is currently highly political in nature, in particular since the Land Reform Act (2003)[4].

[4] The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 establishes statutory rights of access to land and inland water for outdoor recreation. The Statutory right of responsible access commenced on 9 February 2005.

The nature of a case study on land within Scottish Highlands and Islands

McCrone (1997) tells us that our visions of who were are, our identity and culture, are bound up with the land ... embedded in these notions is an attachment to the territory or land which constitutes Scotland in such a way that its iconography is easily recognised and mobilised. These icons have three themes – the wild grandeur of the landscape, remoteness and peace, with a dash of romantic (preferably tragic) history. These constructions are deeply embedded within Scottish nationalism, constructing their own meanings from mountain landscapes, valleys and glens, drawing as heavily on the natural world as upon their separate language to construct difference from England. The land question is strong in Scotland. It is neither one that has ever been settled, nor has the concept of land in Scotland only rural, a topic I return to in the findings chapter.

Nature of research questions: meanings of land and children's voicing

To invite research participants to define a concept, which a researcher can claim is *authentic*[5], places an ethical pressure on the researcher to ensure that they do not lead participants within the meaning-making process. As a result, an exploratory research approach was required and developed (Chambers, 2001, Cornwall, 2002), and substantive research questions were made open in nature with no preconceived academic concept. Based on this baseline 'data', these meanings were compared and contrasted with existing literature on humans' relationship with land. (I present a more refined form of these questions to close the next chapter after an in-depth literature review on both the historical construction of the 'child' and the different concepts of land/landscape within cultural geography and anthropology.)

A third research question, methodological in nature, also arose. When I began this study I was aware from my previous research that the question of whether to represent the 'native's point of view' is no longer tenable within academia, while researching with the native, and "claiming to engage in value-free inquiry across the human disciplines[was also] over" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005: 22)[6]. Instead, the current ethical and methodological question is *how* best to represent that point of view as *authentically* as possible (Van Maanen, 1990; Luttheral, 2001).

Shifting the focus of case studies from an art exhibition to everyday lives

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[5] The concept of *authenticity* within a constructionist approach does not mean an external truth

[6] Today "researchers struggle to develop situational and transitutational ethics that apply to all forms of the research act and its human-to-human relationships" (ibid:22).

The question of how to access and represent participants' voices is an ongoing question within the participatory research process, and a basic assumption is that participants know more about their immediate lives than others (Chambers, 2002). As a result, I began from a common participatory premise that all participants have the potential competency to think through, analyse and present their own concepts of 'land'. This approach views the 'researched' as 'co-researchers' and the production of meaning/knowledge begins with them. However, in adopting a more critical analysis, which recognises the role of both agency and structure (intersubjectivity), participants' meanings of land are not taken as objective truth that is separate from the researcher's own world view. In this thesis, meanings of land are interpreted between participants and me, at a local level within the research space, though participants have a dominant role within this research stage. I then interpret these meanings further through the wider social and historical contexts within the case study settings and, finally, findings are 'interpreted' through academic theories and concepts (Pink, 2001).

This thesis has remained focused on children's voicing and the belief that meaning is not embedded within external objects, such as the physical land or with a representation of land through an art exhibition. This foundational concept created a shift in this thesis, supported by my funding body that moved the case studies from exploring children's meanings of land within art exhibitions to exploring meanings of land encountered within their everyday lives. [However I do not seek to criticise researchers who explore meanings within art exhibitions and museum displays, I only offer an alternative approach towards exploring people's meanings of land.] This shift in the research case studies, also raised a methodological research question, as outlined below.

The formation of a 3rd research question

My fieldnotes highlight discussions with other 'adults' I encountered, many of who, though not all, began from the assumption that my participants, as children aged from 6 to 12 years, were incompetent and different from adults. This latter view was in direct contrast to my experiences during my workshops, which were not designed specifically for children but drew extensively on my experience of working with adults from various cultures (Thomson, 2007). After my fieldwork, and before writing up, I applied for a 3 month ESRC fellowship at the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology, based at Westminster in London, to write a ministerial briefing on incorporating young voices into the political process. My application was successful though my brief was changed to exploring the current political issues within the Primary Science curriculum (POST, 2003).

My time at POST was positive and I was also able to discuss my thesis with colleagues who were from various backgrounds[7], though during this research I again encountered the construction of the child as an incompetent being primed to be a vessel for knowledge and the role of education was to prepare them for future lives (Fieldnote, 23/9/03). However, as the POST briefing explains education has two different aims which potentially conflict. First, education aims to socialise children and prepare them for future society and towards being good citizens. Second, education aims to support and develop children's lives now. The educationalists and policymakers who believed education was to enrich children's lives now were in a minority and all expressed extreme despondency at the current situation. As my questions around accessing children's meanings intensified, the ESRC funded a three-month stay at the Norwegian Centre of Child Research at Trondheim University, Norway to explore these questions and concerns. Here, I was able to discuss my ideas with prominent writers in childhood studies and children's geographies, in particular Stuart Aitken and Chris Jenks. In Norway, I formulated a generic methodological question, which drew upon my research data and is presented here as the third of my thesis' research questions. This question is pragmatic in nature, linking theory to praxis and explores the ongoing debate on the difference between adults and children.

Having introduced the aims of my research questions, I now briefly present my case study and methods; I then locate this research within the field of children's geographies. I continue by outlining the concept of researcher as bricoleur (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005), an important concept in understanding this research. Finally, I present the thesis outline.

The case study

In the tradition of children's geographies and everyday lives, this thesis adopts a case study approach. The case study involved working with five groups of individuals from the islands of Lewis and Harris, which are a part of a chain of islands off the west coast of Scotland called the Outer Hebrides (see Appendix A). Through four workshops, over the space of a month, each group was invited to be artists-in-residence. Using word games and disposable cameras, workshop participants explored the concept of *land*. In these workshops, which formed the foundation of the data collection and subsequent analysis, the children were not my subjects but my co-researchers (John, 2003). (Every individual's name in this thesis is a pseudonym to maintain anonymity.)

[7] in particular with Gary Kass during many a mid-morning, lunch and afternoon break..

In light of the previous discussion on humans' relationship with land, this case study has multiple interesting points. The islands are relatively remote from the mainland of Scotland and also held the potential for land to be defined as a landmass and/or water. A significant number of the population are indigenous, based upon the definition of an ethnic group of people who have inhabited a certain geographic location to which they have been linked to its earliest known population. However, daily life has changed significantly over the past fifty years, as a modern infrastructure has been introduced and maintained, though many island inhabitants still speak Gaelic, Scotland's second national language that has no recent etymological roots with English. This is in contrast to other parts of the Highlands and Islands where Gaelic was forcibly discouraged and often banned. The fractured religious history of these islands has created a volatile, though interesting, political climate. In common with many indigenous populations, the islands have been subjected to colonising forces and in the mid 18th Century when Britain sent missionaries to conquered colonies, such as those in Africa, to convert the inhabitants to Christianity, missionaries were also sent to the Outer Hebrides (McDonald, 1953). Finally, the islands are frequently marketed by the Scottish Tourist Board as a rural idyll.

Locating this research within children's geographies and phenomenological meanings of land

This thesis is placed within the new social studies of childhood, an increasingly interdisciplinary area of study with roots in sociology (cf. James *et al.*, 1998). This research area evolved from the concerns over the construction of a child as less than an adult, which reflected a widespread view within academia, with the absence of children's voices. Children's competence as social actors is a key theme in the new social studies of childhood. The aim, however, is not to celebrate children's creativity and resourcefulness to the detriment of an analysis of the wider social structures (Holloway and Valentine, 2000a)[8].

This area of study has been an ongoing process as reflected in the name changes over the years from the sociology of childhood (Jenks, 1982) through the sociological study of childhood (James and Prout, 1990), to the new social studies of childhood (James *et al.*, 1998). This area continues to shift, as one of the main proponents of the social studies of childhood, Alan Prout, produced a book (2005) critiquing the area and calling for a need for more interdisciplinary research, to move beyond the assertion that children are social

[8] As a result, this thesis adopts the research approach of intersubjectivity where structure and agency merge, a common approach among researchers within children's geographies.

actors and to rethink the rejection of biological influences. He named this new area, the new political studies of childhood. It is within this particular understanding of the area that I place my work, as I seek to uncover some of the power relations which are still embodied within child-centred methodologies.

One prominent group of researchers who have been working in tandem with the new social studies of childhood are geographers, who called their new area of research, children's geographies (cf. Aitken, 2001; Holloway and Valentine, 2000a). This research area is also populated with sociologists, educationalists and philosophers (Holloway and Valentine, 2000a). Using Laurie *et al.*'s (1999) typology, Holloway and Valentine (2000a) assert that human geography offers the new social studies of childhood three contributions. First, it illustrates the *importance of place* and connections between humans and place, "in particular geographical studies can add texture and detail to the currently rather broad-brush analysis of the social construction of childhood" (Holloway and Valentine, 2000a: 230). Secondly, it develops concepts of spatiality within childhood within *the everyday lives* of individuals. The focus is on children's use and attachment to space. Finally, it raises questions on how we think about spatiality (*spatial discourses)*, which links to the previous two, though the focus is on discursive constructions, such as the home, the city street, national identity and the rural idyll (Holloway and Valentine, 2000a). These three contributions from geography inform and support my research project, raising the question as to how my research fits into existing research within this area.

Placing my research within existing research

Children's geographies provides a solid foundation for my work, though despite a plethora of case studies based within children's everyday lives, many case studies have tended to focus on urban rather than rural settings. Where work is in rural areas, the focus is on comparing children's spaces with adults' spaces (Jones, 2000; Valentine, 2000; Panelli, 2002). These researchers' work informs this thesis, though I do not seek to compare children's and adults' power relations within spatial discourses, but within the methodological process, as represented by my third research question, where the dichotomy between adult versus child is merged and within a more complex concept of identities, as discussed in-depth in Chapter Three. [After laying out these arguments, I return to the literature on children within rural everyday spaces in the findings chapter. This short literature placed towards the end of the thesis is not new within doctoral theses that adopt an exploratory approach (cf. Wood, 2004).]

This research also provides an empirical piece of research for the newly formed politics of childhood, which mirrors Stuart Aitken's call for a shake up in children's geography (2005 pers. comm.) and Alan Prout's call to move beyond the repetition that children are social actions, an issue discussed in the next chapter. This research also adds to knowledge within the area of Scottish Studies. Currently, there has been limited empirical research on islanders lives in the Hebrides, except for an ethnography on a village in Lewis (Parman, 1989) and a PhD case study in 2003 on teachers' perceptions of teaching environmental education through the medium of Gaelic (McLeod, 2003). More recent qualitative research has been carried out by Fiona MacKenzie around the politics of land ownership on the Isle of Harris (cf. 2004a; 2006a), which I return to in the conclusions: chapter seven. (My literature search highlighted a number of books on the older populations' memories of their childhood at the beginning of the 20th Century, but there is no research on children's lives in the present years nor in the recent past. Most of the fieldwork undertaken is based on natural sciences' view on the flora and fauna of the islands (Boyd and Boyd, 1998). However, in the storytelling tradition of the island Stuart Hendry (1996) wrote a geology book interspersed with traditional stories and personal reflections. My findings on the dearth of empirical research on the islands generally are supported by the Scottish historian Euan Cameron (2005, pers. comm.).

Researcher as Bricoleur

The concept of a researcher as bricoleur is openly promoted in the well-cited academic book - *Handbook on qualitative research methods* (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005), based on a concept initially proposed by the French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss. A bricoleur is described as a Jack –of-all-trades or a kind of professional do-it-yourself person (Levi Strauss, 1962: 17). The bricoleur uses the tools of his or her methodological trade including whatever strategies, methods or empirical materials are available. The choice of research practices depends on the research questions being asked and the question depends on the context in which the issues arises (Grossberg, Nelson and Treichler, 1992: 2). Denzin and Lincoln (2003: 7) describe a bricoleur as a quilt-maker who uses aesthetic and creative abilities to carefully craft a research project, suggesting that, "the quilter stitches, edits and slices of reality together in a creative process that bring psychological and emotional unity to an interpretive experience". Using a quilt metaphor is integral to this research as it aimed to create opportunities for representing multiple, competing complex aspects simultaneously, without obscuring one voice at the expense of another.

The bricoleur is described as being skilled at performing a large number of diverse tasks, ranging from interviewing, observing and interpreting documents to intensive self reflection and introspection. Furthermore, a bricoleur is expected to read widely and be adept at working between competing and overlapping perspectives and paradigms (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Most importantly, a bricoleur understands that research is an interactive process shaped by one's personal history, gender, class and biography, as well as those who are in the research setting. Methods of textual analysis, semiotics, deconstruction, ethnography and interviews all provide important insights and knowledge and research. In this sense, researchers need not be constrained by their disciplinary basis of knowledge, as a bricoleur works with a heterogeneous collection of material, drawn from various disciplines to construct meaning.

There are inevitably critics of the bricolage approach, who deserve consideration. More superficially, there is the concept of bricoleur that presents a potentially ridiculous image of a handyman or a cartoon character in France called 'Bob le bricoleur' [Bob the builder in English]. However, Levi Strauss made it quite clear that a Jack-of-all-trades in this context has a different and more dignified image than that of a handyman (Crotty, 1998). Other authors adopt a more ontological onslaught and criticise the area for lacking scientific rigour as they move across different disciplines and skate over the surface of research (Jones, 1999; Bartlett, 2000; Shannon, 2003). The American educationalist, scientist and philosopher, Joe Kincheloe, a prolific writer across various disciplines, carefully considers these main criticism and, with Kathleen Berry, dedicates an entire book to redefining rigour within a bricolage approach (2004). He believes this is required within the current academic climate, where disciplines are merging, the concept of knowledge has lost its foothold and empirical researchers are seeking to avoid reductionist forms of meaning making. However, while Kincheloe advocates that all researchers must become bricoleurs. I believe that academia requires a spectrum of research approaches, including those which openly reject bricolage, thereby ensuring that critical discussions are maintained and no babies are thrown out with the bathwater.

Denton and Lincoln states there are multiple ways of being a bricoleur:

1. The theoretical bricoleur who reads widely and is knowledgeable.
2. A bricoleur theorist who works between and within competing and overlapping perspectives.
3. A methodological bricoleur who is adept at performing a large number of diverse task.

4. An interpretist bricoleur who understands the researcher shaped by his or her own personal history.
5. A political bricoleur who understands that as science has power, all research findings have political implications. (Denton and Lincoln, 2003: 9)

In this thesis, my role as researcher can be identified within four of these five categories: theoretical, methodological, interpretist and political bricoleur. The political bricoleur is inherent within the critical nature of exploring the power relations within the construction of children and the natural environment. The interpretist bricoleur is recognised in the reflexive nature of this thesis, and is a common approach when writing ethnographic experiences (Delamont, 1998; Wolf, 1996). The theoretical bricoleur, who also requires a background in the historical construction of different disciplines, and the methodological bricoleur who require training in different methodologies can be understood better in the light of my academic and work backgrounds, which I outline below. From this reflexive passage, the reader can gain an insight into how my experiences moulded the methodologies and methods chosen and the main concepts of this thesis - the social construction of the concept of the child and the meanings of land.

My academic background is inherently interdisciplinary as my first degree was a BA in Business Studies, where I studied elements of Economics, Sociology, Psychology, Marketing, Chartered Surveying, Microbiology, Art and Design. Here my initial formation as a researcher as bricoleur began as I simultaneously read about the history of each discipline that I was studying, and as I encountered anomalies between what I was being taught and my own interest in the main theorists of the disciplines[9]. I followed this with a post graduate degree in Human Resource Management, where I researched a short paper on the impact of naturalised traditions on everyday working practice. I then took a seven-year break from academia and worked as a financial consultant, a chef and mountain-bike guide in the French Alps and worked two years with Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO) in Mongolia as an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher. My time in Mongolia had a profound effect on me, as I arrived the year after the Soviet Union had broken down and experienced queuing for food, and no electricity or water in the depth of winter, but as everyone was in the same position we simply 'got on with it'. When I left, there was an established market economy, flashy cars on the street and American dollars to buy, but

[9] For example, the father of economics Adam Smith, was a professor of moral philosopher, who lived in the 18th century when disciplines hadn't been created and scholars were expected to read widely. Without this context, his words continue to be misinterpreted (Daly and Cobb, 1989).

there was also extensive poverty and street children living in sewers. During my time there I became increasingly aware of the different constructions of knowledge among foreign consultants working on conservation projects and among Mongolian friends and colleagues, in particular differences in the management of the habitat and its fauna and flora, evolved from differing views of the purpose of the land and the place of people within it.

When I returned to Scotland, in 1995, I chose to follow my lifelong interest in people's perceptions of land, land rights, land use and social justice. I undertook a MSc in Natural Resource Management. My interest was, and remains, social justice and different people's perceptions of land though, rather than undertake an MA in Development Studies, I chose to expand my knowledge to areas of the natural sciences as I often found no foothold to discuss environmental social justice issues with other natural scientists, who stopped me short with 'scientific rationale'. Within this course, I was able to tailor my research modules to include the social-nature relationship, for example Human Ecology, while increasing my knowledge of the natural sciences, such as habitat management and ecology. As a result, my thesis and fieldwork remained true to my qualitative background and I carried out a social impact study with forest communities in Papua New Guinea, using participatory techniques based on my experience of teaching in Mongolia with no tangible resources. Creating student-centred workshops, where I learnt to be reflective, inventive and to elicit my students' own knowledge to build the lessons was not an option but a necessity. It is this experience, based on further EFL teaching in Scotland, that I drew on to develop the workshops in Papua New Guinea (PNG), which were held in the rainforests, and the workshops in the Outer Hebrides, that were held within the school space. During research in PNG, I drew extensively on the literatures in both anthropology and human geography and read widely on concepts of sense of place and land. I encountered iconography of landscape (Cosgrove, 1988), a research method that views the landscape as a text and extracts meanings on behalf of others. I found interesting and provocative discussions, within Cosgrove's writings, in particular on the concept of power within meanings. However, the researcher's attempts to read the landscape on behalf of others contradicted the ethos behind participatory methods.

On completing my MSc, I worked with a Scottish NGO as a fair-trade officer with forest communities in the South Pacific, exploring non-timber forest products. During this time I spent five weeks in the South Pacific, exploring new fair-trade products and carried out two short research projects. The first of these projects was a participatory assessment with

honey producers in the field in the Solomon Islands. The second project was an in initial assessment on the fair-trade potential of a nut-oil in Vanuatu for a well-known international fair-trade cosmetic company. During my work in fair-trade I was invited to join a government research project to explore 'fair-trade' with forest communities in Brazil. The reason given for my invitation was that I appeared to be the only individual working in fair-trade with a specialism in forest communities and had a background in participatory research. However, I had become disillusioned with the position of exploring international markets for products that appeared to be better suited for local small-scale markets, though I was able to introduce into the project the concept that the term fair-trade needed to be first established by inviting participants to define the term themselves[10]. [Due to my increasing belief that some forms of fair-trade activities embody a form of colonialism, where the existing cultural practices and daily life do not easily fit with the spatial and temporal demands of the dominant form of market economy in the West] I moved to work in my own country and explored the use of native timber in Scotland.

In 1999, I choose to return to academia to explore my uneasiness at the natural environment being presented as a clearly defined, 'pure' entity in need of protection, where ecological integrity was presented as static, while ecology and cultural studies increasingly presented a view of complex dynamic systems. I initially found a place within Anthropology in Scotland, based upon positive discussions of my MSc thesis with anthropologists. However, I finally choose to study within Education in the east of England, after a university interview where I met my supervisor, who is a constant inspiration, and because Education embodies and embraces my interdisciplinary approach[11]. I obtained an MPhil in Educational Research Methods, which has provided me with excellent training in the different philosophies underpinning qualitative (and quantitative) approaches. This knowledge is essential when beginning to adapt different theories (theoretical bricolage). In addition, I found the space to discuss more fundamental questions on accessing and representing minority voices with educational philosophers[12], sociologist, psychologist and historians.

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[10] I was also disheartened by the ongoing tension between fundamentalist environmentalists who promoted all trade as bad, and all human activities in nature as destructive, and market driven individuals who were unaware of the complexities of forest ecologies and the different forest communities ways of life that were not based on a western market economy.

[11] Unfortunately, educational studies is often perceived as being schooling, though its roots are in knowledge transfer and temporal and spatial power relations (Kincheloe and Berry, 2004).

[12] I was greatly inspired by the late educational philosopher Terry McLaughlin, who often engaged me in lively debate and encouraged my heretical move, in some philosophers' eyes, towards an eclectic approach. He will be missed for his thinking and for himself.

During this time, I was given the label of a 'researcher as bricoleur' by one of my lecturers, a historian, who taught the ontological and methodological section of the course, and through extensive one-to-one discussions fuelled my interest in the field of hermeneutics and phenomenology, and the latter is reflected in Chapter Two. These educational research courses greatly strengthened my thinking within my MPhil thesis, whose title had been preset before I began the course (a non-negotiable entry requirement): *Do ecological imperatives and democracy provide a compatible foundation for environmental education?* (2000).

My MPhil thesis was philosophical in nature and allowed me to explore questions around how the natural environment was being constructed within discourses that were informing and moulding environmental policy and thus environmental education. The MPhil thesis formed the foundations for my current thesis, the social construction of the environment and the problematising of the concept that nature has intrinsic values (Thomson, 1996), which I discuss further in Chapter Two, though I do not focus specifically on environmental education here and use my pedagogic training to inform my methodology.

Early on during my PhD research, I was employed by the Environment Agency to carry out focus groups with the main construction companies and their perceptions of the Agency. My experiences reinforced my research 'belief' that by inviting people to first define the topic under discussion can create an open platform for debate, in particular where latent conflict may exist between parties[13]. As outlined earlier during my fieldwork I spent three months in Norway, and while in the UK I continued to work intermittently as a participatory researcher, and talked extensively about the philosophies with colleagues working full-time on participatory projects. This interaction allowed me to explore new ideas and approaches, which kept my philosophical discussions around participatory approaches grounded in current practical applications. During the last year of writing up my PhD, I worked as a senior rural researcher in the Scottish Government, advising on both qualitative and quantitative methodologies[14] and working with rural communities on action research projects, which provided me with a practical site to explore and test out different constructions of the 'rural' within the Scottish context, an issue I discuss in Chapter Six.

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[13] Relations between the construction industry and the EA are problematic. As part of these focus groups I invited participants to define the construction industry from their own working pracices, which created an open debate on the problems between the two parties.

[14] This thesis has already found a practical use, since based upon my methodological reflections on participatory research, I was able to present an argument to economist colleagues to include participatory research into a country-wide and mainly quantitative research project.

Thesis outline

In Chapter One, I present the rationale behind this empirical research and locate this thesis mainly within children's geographies. I introduce the concept of researcher as bricoleur, which sets the later discussions around mixed methodologies and data analysis.

Chapter Two presents and examines my theoretical framework in three sections. The first section outlines the constructions of child and children over centuries that have resulted in children being both 'othered' and silenced within society and academic research until recently. In the second section, I present the new sociology of childhood that adopts a new epistemological approach towards children as competent social actors. In the third section, I outline a fluid and multiple definition of land as landscape that also overlaps with concepts of place, space and power as outlined in Section One of the chapter. The aim of this section is not to define what land or landscape is but what it is not, and to leave the possibilities for such definitions open to the research participants. At the end of Chapter Two, I present three research questions, which are exploratory in nature.

Chapter Three presents and examines the methodological guidelines in two sections. Section One outlines the current discourses and criticisms around the use of participatory methodologies, in particular the post-structuralist criticism that participation is power and needs to be resisted or that participation is about empowerment and involves circumnavigating power and creating 'ideal speech' and power-free situations (Habermas, 1980) for participants. Here, I build on Kesby's concept of participation as spatial practice (1999) that merges the definitions of power and empowerment together and provides the concept of empowerment as performance. In Section Two, I present and answer the third research question, which is methodological in nature, and in contrast to most research guidelines for research with children (cf. Alderson and Morrow, 2000) I outline why I choose not to design methods specifically for children (Thomson, 2007).

Chapter Four presents and examines the data collection and analysis guidelines in three sections. In Section One, I first describe the data collection and analysis guidelines, since fieldwork and analysis is increasingly being recognised as occurring simultaneously at a local level (Glaser, 1998; Charmaz, 2000; Pink, 2001). I build on the work of Sarah Pink (2000), a visual ethnographer whose reflexive analytical guidelines support the three levels of data collection and analysis that occurred within this research. In Section Two, I present the rationale for choosing an artist-in-residence project and the methods within each workshop. I also describe the workshop process to highlight the reflexive nature of the

research. In Section Three, I provide examples of local level analysis and interpretations with participants, around their own research material and from the wider field. Due to the iterative nature of data collection and analysis (Wolcott, 1999; Pink, 2001; Rehn, 2002) there is no attempt to present clear linear pathways of analysis, instead I provide an example of how a participant's photograph developed multiple meanings and was incorporated into wider analysis as the image and its meanings moved physical locations and social contexts, to inform more substantive findings presented in Chapter Six.

Chapter Five introduces the case study in three sections. The first section provides the social and physical background to the case study location: the islands of Lewis and Harris, including a brief outline of the infrastructure, the fractured nature of the island's religion and the island's fauna and flora. The second section describes the five different groups that I worked with, and I examine the benefits of working with rural schools. Section Three discusses the islands' land tenure and land use patterns over the past few centuries, as well as some divisions between past and current lifestyles on the islands. In preparation for Chapter Six, these stories are presented as one possible route through the fractured histories around the Scottish Highlands and islands, fuelled by the Scottish tourist industry, and have become "colonised by an empire of signs" (Womack, 1989: 1), such as heather, the Clearances and 'Europe's last wilderness' (McCrone, 2000).

Chapter Six presents and discusses the findings of this thesis. Findings showed that meanings of land were not uniform though many meanings embodied movement 'along familiar paths, winding memories and stories around places and creating a sense of self and 'belonging'. Participants were not controlled excessively by adult narratives of stranger-danger but by the physical topography and an ability to traverse the island, by their own body or other means of transport, which mirrored many inhabitants' experiences. Meanings were both material and social and, therefore hybrid in nature (Whatmore, 2002).

In Chapter Seven I return to the three research questions, as outlined at the end of Chapter Two, and present my conclusions that, participant's meanings of land can be understood through two theories of humans' relationship with everyday land. First, Ingold's phenomenological concept of landscape as dwelling, that recognise the influence of past generations (walking the land, tending the sheep), and more 'modern' activities, (watching soap operas in the home). Second, Massey's spatial concept of a progressive sense of place that recognise the influence of wider social forces and explains everyday meanings of land inhabited by a Bengal tiger. A third research question, explored a controversial

methodological question: Is doing research with children different from doing research with adults? (Punch, 2000). This final issue aims to address a narrow readership problem within children's geographies and to persuade all researchers, interested in different citizen's voices, to no longer view the 'child' as 'other' to the adult and, therefore, 'outside mainstream social research'.

CHAPTER TWO
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter presents the theoretical framework of the thesis in three sections. The aim of the chapter is to provide the context for the research question, which are exploratory in nature and are placed within the sociological strand of children's geographies that builds on the new social studies of childhood.

The first section outlines the constructions of child and children over centuries that have resulted in children being both 'othered' and silenced within society and academic research until recently. In the second section, I present the new social studies of childhood that adopts a new epistemological approach towards children as competent social actors. This new epistemology is set against the more dominant history of childhood studies, as informed by developmental psychology which finds it roots in the Enlightenment. And I outline why my research does not fit within this strand of studies on children's everyday lives. I then outline how researchers within children's geographies have developed the new social studies of childhood, by introducing the concept of spatiality and the importance of place, everyday spaces and spatial discourses. The aim of this section is not to define what land or landscape is but what it is not, and to leave the possibilities for such definitions open to the research participants. This thesis lies within this area of research. In the third section, I outline a fluid and multiple definition of land as landscape that also overlaps with concepts of place, space and power as outlined in Section One.

Section 1: Constructions of children and childhood

Introduction

The history of childhood and children is both complex and multiple in nature. Aries (1962) argues that in the Middle Ages children were regarded as miniature adults, rather than as a distinct social category defined by biological age and consequently no special provisions were made for them[1]. Once children demonstrated capabilities such as reason,

[1] Judith Enew (2002) has noted that most child researchers refer to Aries' notion of childhood with little question. Various authors, in particular historians (cf Archard, 1993) have criticised Aries' proposition, his methods and focus on only the visual and religious icons, which are a representation of the lives of the elite only. However, while his critics reject only the nature of the constructions, none have rejected the concept that childhood is socially constructed. Aries and his critics laid the path for subsequent academics to study childhood in its own right, as discussed in more detail in Section 2 of this chapter.

concentration and strength, they were invited into the work world, including domestic service, apprenticeship and education. During the 16th Century, children started to be defined in opposition to adults; and from the Enlightenment onwards this understanding of children – as a particular class of person – has grown to dominate societies' social imaginations (Jenks, 1996). As such, childhood and child are both social constructions (Jenks, 1993). As James and Jenks (1996) and Aitken (2004) argue, the biological facts of infancy are the raw material upon which cultures work to fashion a particular version of the child. This social process is constructed upon dominant moral assumptions (Aitken, 2001). Most notably, two contrasting narratives have dominated constructions of children within Western society. Jenks (1996) labels these views Dionysian and Apollonian, the child as devil and the child as angel respectively. These views embody a long standing discourse that compares children to nature (Aitken, 2001) and have moulded research within child – environment relations and educational theories, and in particular environmental education.

Child as angel or child as devil

Dionysian understandings of childhood regard children as inheritors of the original sin and as possessing animal-like instincts, such as wildness. Children are regarded as developing towards adulthood out of a state of primal animalism. This is the concept of child as a little devil who is inherently unruly and troublesome, and requires disciplining and socialisation to weigh behaviour. This concept dominated understandings of childhood in the 17th Century. For example, Takanishi (1978:11) states that the child is represented within child-rearing literature as being "filled with potential sin that could be redeemed or averted by the constant and determined efforts of his parents". However, the harsh attitude towards children that preached 'spare the rod and spoil the child' was built on the belief that such behaviour would prevent a child's soul from going to hell. "By the end of the 17th Century the 'Cambridge Platonists', a group of academics who were against authoritarianism began to propose a revaluation of childhood" (Somerville, 1982 cited in Valentine, 2004:2). They proposed that children held an innate goodness that was being corrupted by the social world. This innocence was neither inherently good nor bad. These men postulated principles of innate sympathy or benevolence that formed the basis of conscience and social behaviour that forms the Apollonian view of childhood (Valentine, 2004).

These discussions led to debates on the polarised nature of childhood in the 18th Century, which were openly contested. On the one hand, there was a romantic notion of original innocence among contemporary novelists and poets, such as Coleridge and Wordsworth,

which has been a guiding influence up until 20th Century writings of Thoreau and Emerson (Aitken, 2001). Rousseau's *Emile* (1762), for example, explores the story of a growing up boy who develops naturally from birth under the guidance of a wise tutor. In the novel, children are compared to nature: trees to nurture and plants to water. *Emile* is a novel that is seen to mark the transition from the child as devil to the child as angel (Somerville, 1982). In contrast, there was a reaction against providing children with more rights. The late 18th Century was destabilised by European revolutions and the rights of children were challenged in the United Kingdom (UK) by Conservative writers anxious for an ordered society (Hendry, 1990). Gradually the notion of childhood as innocence and the innate goodness of the child, violated by an evil society, emerged as the dominant discourse (Takanishi, 1970). This concept of children was maintained throughout the Victorian period and is represented within paintings of that period, such as those by John Ramsay, who painted cherub-faced children playing in the fields or sea. However, this 19th Century notion focused upon the upper- and middle-class children, while working-class children were exploited in factories or chimney sweeps, as represented in Kingsley Charles' book *The Waterbabies* (1863). This child exploitation led some middle-class reformers to attempt to regulate certain forms of child labour. Hendrick (1990:41) states that:

> Part of this concern was based on a conceptualisation of children as a natural resource that needed to be nurtured and conserved but more pragmatically it also derived from the fear that the brutalisation of [working-class] children was contributing to the dehumanisation of social class.

It was feared that this 'dehumanisation of social class' would lead to moral and social instability. The view of wildness and child often focuses on boys and Kenneth Kidd argues that 'boyology' is based on ancient folklore and mythology of feral children (2004). Boys, especially, are constructed as bodies to be observed and disciplined and Kidd argues that this belief has led institutional powers, such as education and the law, to the assumption that the study and control of children is their domain.

Education: moulding the future through citizenship

Education was perceived to be one way to instil discipline, respectful order and punctuality in working-class children. Schools were established as moral hospitals and to provide correct training (May, 1973). As a result, middle-class values were imported into the dominant value system through the education system and had the additional benefit for the middle-classes of helping to control their own children (Valentine, 2004). Education

became a fundamental process through which a child transformed into an adult (Postman, 1982; Archard, 1993), based on Rousseau's idea of the perfect child and Locke's view of the child as *tabula rasa* (Aitken, 2001).[2] Paradoxically, at the same time education also signalled a move to the recognition of childhood as a special period of time separated off from the responsibilities of adulthood.

As the concept of universal education was promoted as the correct way to create good citizenship (Lee, 2001) the construction of juvenile delinquency also developed. In the early 19th Century there was no separate legal system for the young, and prisons increasingly became full of children. During this time, middle-class or working-class children were seen as a moral and physical pestilence, and they were likened to packs of dogs (May, 1973): a modern day concept taken to extremes in Rio de Janeiro in the mid 1990s, when its streets were 'cleaned–up' by the elite through the culling of street-children in much the same manner as the culling of dogs (Tomas, 1994)). Above all, it was feared that these children who were without a childhood were a threat to those that had one (Chanel, 1979).

The first statutory legislation that recognised juvenile delinquency identified children as not necessarily responsible for their own actions, and requiring care and protection, mirroring the Apollonian concept of child. This concept of the child as an inadequate adult remains today in most legislation, where the adult as competent is structured against its necessary 'other': child as incompetent (Thomson, 2007). When parents failed to provide core moral care the state and the legislation decreed have the right to act in *loco parentis* (May, 1973). Reformatory schools were introduced and were "the very embodiment of contemporary belief in the latent power of the social circle environment influence behaviour." (Ploszajska, 1994: 413). Boys' reformatory schools were established in rural sites, the antithesis of the corrupting environment in the urban city; girls institutions were located in suburban areas reflecting the domesticity that girls were expected to aspire to (Ploszajska, 1994). In the 1950s the Breath of Fresh Air scheme in the United States of America was set-up to take inner-city children to rural places to stay, though there were no checks on the family and no preparation for the children (Vanderbeck, 2007).

Through legislation (in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries) and the introduction of mass schooling (and later the UK National Health Service), Hendrick (1990) argues that the

[2] Piaget's theoretical structure of how children learn was introduced in the early 20th Century and held sway until the later part of the 20th Century.

mythical condition of childhood was popularised and gradually a universal notion of childhood emerged. Steedman (1990) described changes which took place between 1870 and 1930 to result in a distinctive shift in the economic and sentimental value of children. The economic value of children shifted away from the child as a unit of labour, towards a conceptualisation of the child as a dependent being, accompanied with a change in the nature of family life and the site of economic production (Anderson, 1998).

The concept of the child in need of adult protection, and childhood as a time of innocence and naivety, developed over the past 150 years through two media. Firstly, through welfare protection measures that are said to have improved children's educational, legal, environmental and physical conditions, and life-opportunities. Secondly, though the increasing resources dedicated to children by their parents, in terms of toys, specialised fashion, food and entertainment markets (Stainton Rogers and Stainton Rogers, 1992). During the 20th Century the length of time young people are legally defined as dependent on their parents has been extended by increasing the school leaving age from 14 to 16 years, and current discussions focus around raising the level to 18.[3] In contrast, authors such as Postman (1982) argue that the length of childhood is contracting and accuse the media, fashion industry and technologies of lowering the boundaries between adults and children.[4]

The innate innocence and vulnerability of the child was also reinforced in the late 20th Century "through public discourses about dangerous strangers and child abuse" (Valentine, 2004:4). Kitizinger (1990: 158) states that the "...victim is the child and ultimately, childhood itself is at issue ...". The concern is not specifically for the individual child but for the attack on and defence of childhood itself, that has developed into an institutional ideal, that "often exists independently from, and sometimes in spite of, actual flesh and blood children" (Valentine, 2004: 5). The 20th Century witnessed a further development of the concept of a coherent universal childhood. As such, the child is set apart from the

[3] A more recent change in welfare provision, which for example, increases the age at which teenagers can receive welfare benefits in the UK, from 16 to 18 years.

[4] The family, particularly the mother, has been conceived as crucial to the development and well-being of children. When working-class mothers, single mothers and mothers of ethnic minority children are seen to deviate from 'middle-class' norms, they are accursed by the media and politicians of creating unruly or 'dangerous' children instead of law-abiding and mature citizens (Phoenix and Woolett, 1991). However, despite these ongoing discourses seen in everyday life, numerous studies show that these accusations are in fact modern myths with no foundation (Walkerdine and Lucy 1989). Phoenix and Woolett (1991:18), argue that mothers in the UK are expected to be the guardians of liberal democracy by raising their children to be self-regulating beings. These idealised constructions of 'being a good mother' are predominantly white and middle-class, and are dominant in child-care and parenting manuals as well as everyday discourses (Valentine, 2004).

adult world, during the time of childhood, (though there is no firm agreement on what age the transition from childhood to adulthood occurs): children are innocent, incompetent and dependent on parents and the state.

The dominant concept of childhood is built on Rousseau's image of Emile's childhood - a time of happiness and a freedom to do as you please with no responsibilities to or for others. This image of childhood and children is a myth rather than a reality experienced by children today. Childhood as experienced by different individuals has rarely been universal. These individuals are defined not only by biological age but also by other characteristics, such as experiences of poverty, disability, ill-health, homelessness, being taken into care or being a carer for a parent, and are all denied access to the idealised time of innocence and dependency (James and Jenks, 1996). Some children may choose to reject this time of innocence and dependency. Judith Ennew's work (1999) with street children highlights the choices taken by these individuals who prefer to live on the streets than in their homes which could be controlling and restrictive. Ennew (1999; 2001) criticises the concept of the home as a place of protection and where children 'should be'. In a similar vein, the concept of the adult has been based on an unchallenged assumption that social development follows on from physical growth (Lee, 2001) and marks the transition from simplicity to complexity and from irrationality to rationality (Hockey and James, 2003). In reality, many children have to demonstrate maturity and responsibility at an early age. For example, children, whose parents are unable to communicate in spoken English, often assume the role of an interpreter on a daily basis. In addition, some adults for various reasons are perpetually immature and need care and protection in their daily lives, though they do not always receive it having outgrown the social category of 'child' (Thomson, 2007).

A universal childhood inhabited by a universal child

As Valentine notes, the 20th Century notion of universal childhood is further complicated by the invention of the teenager, in the 1950s – a notion of being neither child nor adult (2004). The focus has been on the consumption market of this social grouping whose stereotypical image is of lives represented through teenage cultures of fashion and raves that shows off youth and vitality. In parallel to this, a link remains between subcultures, in particular following the long-standing construction of the immorality of the working classes, juvenile crime and gang violence (Hollands, 2001). Hebdige explains that "the image clusters, the bleak portraits of juvenile offenders and exuberant cameos of teenage life reverberate, alternate and sometimes they get crossed" (1983: 31).

Teenagers are placed awkwardly between childhood and adulthood and they are at times constructed as innocent children in need of protection from adult sexuality, violence and commercial exploitation (Valentine, 2004. At other times, the same individuals are represented as articulate and as liable to drinking, doing drugs and acting violently (Hollands, 2001). Diduck (1999) suggests that the increasing number of children acting in un-childlike ways is creating fear and anger, as this representation of the child is beyond the control and comprehension of many adults; the most famous example being the Jamie Bulgar case where two young British boys (11 and 13 years old) kidnapped and murdered a two year old child in 1998.

Over the past four centuries childhood has been constructed and reproduced in various ways around the polarised discourses of angels or devils, despite the complex realities within which this diverse group of individuals live their lives. Contradictory versions of childhood continue to be mobilised today for different political ends, highlighting that the child is not about the individual but is a political code inscribed upon by others (Aitken, 2001). These binary representations have been reproduced in academia and have constructed the child as lesser than the adult. As a result, the child has been 'othered' and their voices excluded from society and academia. Ludmilla Jordanova argues that Western science over the last three centuries has referred to children in terms of nature and that this discourse acts as a prison (1989). This argument has been highlighted by the researcher Alan Prout (2004) and extended and discussed by the geographer, Stuart Aitken (cf. 2004). Research on children – environment relations was dominated by developmental psychology, until the late 20th Century, when a new epistemology towards children, called the new social studies of childhood evolved, as outlined below.

Section 2: Reconstructing 'children' in academic research

> One academic consequence of the construction of child as less than adult and childhood as a phase of socialisation has led to children been ignored across the social sciences, in particular in sociology, and are not visible in research that includes their everyday experiences. (Valentine *et al.*, 2002:775)

In 1986, Ambert identified the silence of children's voices in North American sociological research, arguing that this silence mirrored the ongoing influence of founding theorists whose disciplinary approach was shaped by the patriarchal values of their societies, and that it valued the 'big issues', such as class, bureaucracies and political systems. Brannen and O'Brien (1995) highlight a similar situation in sociology in the UK where children's voices were silent, including areas where children's voices would be expected to be heard, such as the sociology of family and education.

The focus was on the forces of socialisation: the family and the child were presented as passive subjects moulded by the forces of social structures. This dominance of socialisation theories over time meant that children were constructed as human becomings rather than human beings (Qvortrup, 1992), who through the process of socialisation would be moulded into fully formed human beings (James et al, 1998). Children were considered incomplete and incompetent (Brannen and O'Brien, 1998). However, this construction of children and their absence from the research agenda has been increasingly challenged over the past 15 years[5] by a number of different approaches. Stainton Rogers and Stainton Rogers (1992) analysed the social construction of childhood while James and Prout (1990) combined this notion with an understanding of children as diverse social subjects and they slowly developed an emergent paradigm in the new social studies of childhood. These approaches are believed within the Scandinavian perspective, which focuses on both the macro and micro aspects of childhood studies (Holloway and Valentine, 2000) and informs this thesis, through my time at Norwegian Centre of Child Research. This perspective is evident in Qvortrup's work on childhood as structure (1984), the British sociologists Brannen and O'Brien's work on children in families (1999) and the British educationist Berry Mayall's writings on generations (1999; 2004). In the sociology of education, for example, researchers who focused on the formal side of education, paid increasing attention to children's agency in analyses of identity and difference within the school setting (Ratailand, 2004).

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[5] . In 1994, Oakley drew on Walby's evolutionary model of the development of academic knowledge about woman and argued that children's studies were still in an early phase due to the absence of children's voices.

The new social studies of childhood

As this research focus developed, James, Jenks and Prout (1998) outlined a new research paradigm for the new social studies of children with an epistemological break that no longer viewed the child as a passive object for study. This group of researchers challenged sociology's tendency to ignore children's voices, in two ways. First, they argued that childhood was a social construction rather than a biological given, that varied with time and space, and as such childhood and all its different facets were worthy of sociological attention. Second and of most importance for this thesis, they created a new epistemological paradigm and studied children as competent social actors rather than pre-adult human becomings. Rather than accepting the modern construction of child as less capable than adults they argue that children are active agents within their own life and world:

> The child is conceived of as a person, a status, a course of action, a set of needs, rights or defences – in sum, as a social actor ... this new phenomenon, the 'being' child, can be understood in its own right. It does not have to be approached from an assumed shortfall of competence, reason or significance. (James, Jenks and Prout, 1998: 207)

This research paradigm has influenced research in various disciplines including geographical research on children's relationship with their environment, carried out not only by geographers but also sociologists and educationalists. This focus on the sociological roots of children's geographies adopts a different focus from the psychological approach (Holloway and Valentine, 2000), such as mapping abilities, and this forms the framework for this thesis. However, before outlining the new social studies of childhood as applied within children's geographies, I first outline the psychological strand of children's geographies and present the rationale for why this thesis does not fit within this research approach. However, in keeping with a bricolage approach neither strand offers a right or a wrong framework for exploring human – environment relations: each strand only offers a different perspective on a similar issue.[6]

[6] In addition, Roger Hart (2006) has also called for the sociological strand of children's geographies to no longer reject the psychological strand and to search for common ground.

One critical history of the psychological strand of the child – environment relationship

In the late 19th Century and up until the today, Charles Darwin's evolutionary theories have had a significant impact on many areas of academia (Johnston, 1995). Within the research on children, the notion of recapitulation was initially developed where an individual's lifetime mirrors the patterns and stages of development of the species but on a vastly scaled-down time frame (Davis and Wallbridge, 1981). Another influence was the work of Jean Baptiste Lamarck, who argued that environmental responses were passed down through 'natural selection', a concept that Jay Appleton (1979) developed further into his 'habitat theory' which heavily influenced social research on person – environment relations through the 1980s. Appleton proposed that our preferences for specific environments, such as hilltops and caves, evolved and were etched into our genes. As the influence of environmental determinism waned within academia, Appleton's theory too decreased in its influence within geography, but has continued to dominate theories on environmental aesthetics (cf. Waterman, 2000). Neo-Lamarckianism and recapitulation also provided the foundations for the field of developmental psychology at the turn of the 20th Century, as developed by Granville Stanley Hall (1964). Hall wrote about genetic memories, which underpins the argument that children are drawn towards play with sand and mud as a representation of primal ooze and later to form gangs to fulfil their tribal instinct. More recently, Bunting and Cousins (1995) focused on children's views of their environment in Canada and highlight that children prefer pastoral and natural settings. Theories based on recapitulation were later rejected by development theorists. However, the concept of development being linked to age, survived intact for most of the last century (Davies *et al.*, 2000) and was further strengthened by the work of the French sociologist, Jean Piaget (1955) who had one of the greatest influences on development theories of the 20th Century (Simon, 2002). His main theory was the concept that the child developed through four set stages, defined by biological age.

Piaget's work developed from Darwin's notion that children enter the world with a genetically transmitted nature and the neo-Lamarckian notion that this nature then enables children to adapt to their environments (Aitken, 2001:43). Piaget was both a structuralist and a constructivist, who believed that reality is a construction of thought. Unlike that of his predecessors, Piaget's work was based on empirical experiments rather than philosophical discussions, and his experiments lasted for nearly fifty years without being displaced in their entirety and his thinking still forms the basis of modern developmental psychology. His work also moulded children's geographies and educational theories

(Holloway and Valentine, 2000) and found favour with academics who were critical of behavioural theories which separated children from spatial stimuli (cf. Merritt, 1999). Piaget promoted the view that children actively engaged with their environment.

Children and mapping

Piaget has had a significant affect on theories on child – environmental relations and in the 1970s, the main academic discipline on space – human geography – quickly appropriated these theories (Aitken, 2001). Theories on child mapping created an area of children's geographies based on psychological disciplines. A dominant notion was the concept that children's competencies expand as their horizons expand from the crib to home, garden, neighbourhood, city, nation, etc (cf. Matthews, 1995). Roger Hart's concept of the child's developmental ladder (1972) was based on this notion and is often used in environmental educational work (Takano, 2004). Erikson presented the notion that a child's competencies developed through three scales of environmental contact: the autosphere – a purely sensory and egocentric environment, the microsphere and the macrosphere. Robin Moore (1965) built on biological and ecological metaphors and suggested that children occupy 'niches' that expand with age. Hugh Matthews and Melanie Limb (1989) built on Erikson and Moore's work and proposed that children develop through a hierarchy of nested spaces. In addition and in contrast to their contemporaries within the psychological strand of children's geographies, Matthews and Limb acknowledged elements of social constructionism (Aitken, 2001); they rejected Moore's biological determinism and highlighted that their model was only one way of viewing child – environmental relations, and as it was based on a 'normal' developing physical child was not suitable for all types of bodies.

In geographical research and within the psychological strand, children are often asked to map areas to assess their competencies. However, mapping skills of children has been one of the most contested areas, between the geographers Roger Downs (1975) and Jim Blaut (1976). In particular, Downs argued that children learn mapping, in line with Piaget's 1955 concept of the four stages of the developing child, while Blaut promoted a nature debate arguing that all children have innate mapping instincts. Downs argued that all children could understand aerial maps. However, my own research in Papua New Guinea in 1996, contradicts these findings for forest village inhabitants, children and adults, who found ordinance survey aerial maps difficult to interpret. Living in dense forest villages, travelling from one area to the other meant travelling by river along banks covered with trees, by foot through dense forests or by plane where the symbols displayed on ordinance survey maps

were masked by rainforest.[7] In contrast, Loneman (1991) found that in Nepal herds-people, accustomed to walking on the high mountain ridges and looking down upon the land below, found aerial maps easy to understand.

The construction of children's development based upon mapping metaphors holds roots in the Enlightenment and Rene Descartes attempted to bring order to a world of knowledge based on religious beliefs. Cartography was developed during colonisation, and to aid colonisation strategies (cf. Harley, 1991). The original aim of cartography was to standardise places to create stereotypes and erase differences and to allow for a neatly ordered knowledge of the world around us, in particular before nature became popular in the form of gardens. Rex Walford (1997) carried out some interesting work on children's understanding of land, though through the use of pre-set mapping exercise, based on Western concepts of mapping, where representations of land were already preset by researchers (cf. Robertson et al, 2000). As Aitken (2001) notes, each epistemology and subsequent methodology, as outlined previously, regardless of their differences promote two concepts: the subject is Cartesian in nature and the context of everyday lives is ignored, meaning that "context is stripped away and place is no longer important" (Harley, 1992: 24). Both place and everyday spaces play an important part within the theoretical framework of this thesis, and this is outlined below.

New social studies of childhood within children's geographies

British geographers, Sarah Holloway and Gill Valentine built upon the developments within the new social studies of childhood, by introducing spatiality into the area, which provides a useful theoretical framework for this thesis. By employing the typology of work on identities as developed by a group of British feminist geographers, Laurie et al, (1999), Holloway and Valentine introduced three inter-related ways of thinking about spatiality in relation to children's lives: the importance of place, everyday space and spatial discourses, as outlined below.

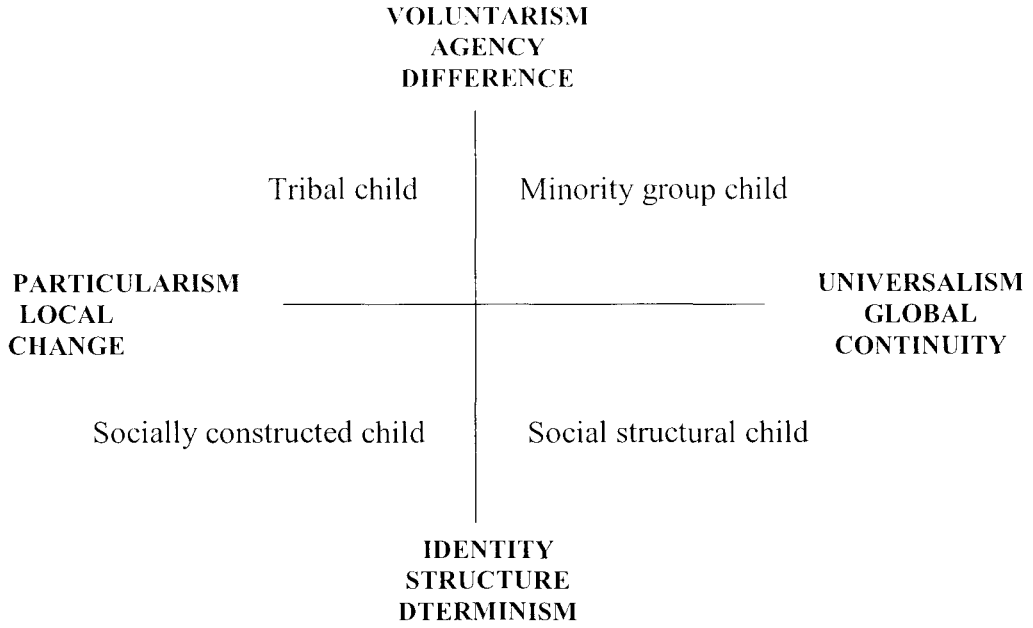
The importance of place: merging social dichotomies

James *et al.* (1998) outline a useful classification of work to date within the new social studies of childhood that identifies a split between research which is global in focus and that which has more local concerns. They argue that researchers in the new social studies

[7] In addition, I discovered that due to problems in negotiating the terrain, many of the maps were incorrect (Thompson, 1996).

of childhood have conceived of the child in four specific ways that are linked to a range of social dichotomies and can be divided into two pairs (See Figure 2.1)

Figure 21 **Theoretical field for the social study of childhood**



Source: James et al. (1998:2006)

The socially structured child is a structural category, an enduring feature of all societies, a temporal place inhabited by each individual during a certain period (cf. Qvortrup *et al.*, 1994). The minority group child is an embodiment of the empirical and politicised version of the social structural child (James *et al.*, 1994), where advantages are conferred on some adults and disadvantages on some children (cf. Alanen, 1992). The socially constructed child is where the child is constructed through a world of meanings created by themselves and adults, and not through any natural or social forces (cf. Stainton Rogers *et al.*, 1998; James and Prout, 1990). The tribal child is the empirical and politicised version of the socially constructed child, where children's social worlds are real places with real meanings and where children's social action is structured through a system that is unfamiliar and inaccessible to adults (Opie, 1969).

In laying out the theoretical field Holloway and Valentine (2000) highlight that links are rarely made from right to left (see Figure 2.1) and the dichotomies of global/local, universal/particular and continuity/change remain rooted 'in place'. This lack of links creates a problematic split as macro-studies and micro-studies rarely meet and therefore do not reflect current studies within geography and social sciences that recognise a more fluid

movement between local and global, as informed by 'a progressive sense of place' (Massey, 1994; 1996). In order to understand Massey's concept of progressive space there is a need to place her concept within a more traditional concept of sense of place.

Sense of place: from static to fluid, bounded to porous

The political geographer John Agnew (1987) outlines three fundamental aspects of place as a 'meaningful location', which act as a useful starting point in outlining the multiple potential meanings of land. For Agnew, place as location means to pinpoint a place in relation to other places. Place as locale means the material setting for the place and the physical shape that creates the place. These places can be imaginary, such as in books or novels since "as well as being located and having a material visual form, places must have some relationship to humans and the human capacity to produce and consume meaning" (Cresswell, 2004: 7). Finally, place as sense of place for Agnew means the subjective and emotional attachment people have to place.

Places that are understood to have a strong "sense of place" have a strong identity and character that is deeply felt by local inhabitants and visitors[8]. Sense of place is a social phenomenon that exists independently of any one individual's perceptions or experiences, yet is dependent on human engagement for its existence. The traditional concept of sense of place is an emotional attachment seen as that which is linked to the natural environment, though more recently, researchers view this concept as a mix of natural and cultural features in the landscape that includes inhabitants of the place[9], though the concept of place has tended to be fixed and rooted in place.

Progressive sense of place: movement and process

However, the idea of 'place' as separate, identifiable and different is changing, as the boundaries between places are becoming less clear and more blurred in the post-modern age of travel, communication, multinational corporations and mobility (Giddens, 1993). A wider notion of 'space' where those places historically developed was seen to exist beyond their individual existence. "The changing organization of space has, it is argued, disrupted our existing forms of, and concepts of, place" (Massey in Massey and Jess 1995: 54). Manuel Castells writes of such shifts in his works: "The fundamental fact is that social meaning evaporates from places, and therefore from society, and becomes diluted and

[8] The study of why some places hold special meanings to particular peoples has been explored by a variety of disciplines, including cultural geographers, anthropologists, sociologists and urban planners.

[9] More recently within cultural studies, modes of codification have been employed to define and label certain places, such as the 'World Heritage Site' and within ecology as 'Sites of Special Scientific Interest' (SSSIs).

diffused in the reconstructed logic of a space of flows whose profile, origin, and ultimate purpose are unknown" (*ibid.*). The idea of a 'space of flows' displaces 'place' as separate and 'closed' and further defines social space as a "complexity of social relations stretched out and meeting and intersecting with each other" (*ibid.*) in what Edward Relph has termed 'placelessness' (cf. Relph, 1976; Castells, 2000: 407-459).

Doreen Massey advocates a more progressive sense of place and "Instead, then, of thinking of places as areas with boundaries around, they can be imagined as articulated movements in networks of social relations and understandings" (cited in Carter, Donald and Squires 1993: xii). However, people desire a 'home-place', rootedness, belonging – a landscaped sense of national, local identity as Stuart Hall terms it (1995:181), as a form of fixture and security in the unsteady 'space of flows', that merges previously defined cultures, identities and places. This approach is not a simple, one-way system of oppression or imposed power, but could be viewed as a meeting ground, as Massey would say, of many complex, interrelated forces struggling for authority. The cultural theorist Stuart Hall also calls for a rejection of place as settled, enclosed and internally coherent, in favour of "a replacement or supplementation by a concept of place as a meeting place, the location of the intersections of particular bundles of activity spaces, of connections and interrelations, of influences and movements (Massey cited *ibid.*).

Within children's geographies, geographers such as Cindi Katz (1995) and Doreen Massey (1999) explored children's/youth's lives from a more spatially constructed world view rather than being fixed in one place. Holloway and Valentine (2000) explored how global processes through Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) were shaping children's lives in the UK. They argued that the link between the global and local is important because the boundaries of the global/local dualism, like many others, are unstable and blurred through everyday practice. Focusing only on the macro or the micro is to provide only a limited understanding of children's lives. By using a spatial understanding of global/local, which blurs the boundaries of the dualism, Valentine argues that "we can bridge the gap" which James *et al.* (1998) have shown exists within the new social studies of childhood.

Everyday spaces: making and remaking of meaning

The second way of understanding spatiality and childhood is through everyday spaces. Space is a highly contested term across disciplines, though the French theorist Henri Lefebvre has developed a more sophisticated definition of space (Cresswell, 2001). In *The*

Production of Space (1974), Henri Lefebvre outlines different levels of space, from an abstract, natural space ('absolute space') to more complex spatialities that are socially produced ('social space'). It is social space that is most similar to place (Cresswell, 2001) and "place is space to which meaning has been ascribed" (Carter, Donald and Squires 1993: xii). Lefebvre argues that space is a social product or a complex social construction, which affects spatial practices and perceptions. Lefebvre argues that this social production of space is fundamental to the reproduction of society. As a Marxist, he incorporates Gramsci's concept of hegemony and argues that the social production of space is a tool used by the hegemonic class to reproduce and enforce its dominant ideologies. As such space is both a means of production and a means of control. However, space in this thesis is not held to be only a form of control; space can also be contested and redefined and be spaces of radical possibilities (hooks, 1997). This issue is discussed in more depth in Chapter Three.

Within new social studies of childhood, James *et al.* (1998) build on Lefebvre's work and state that social space is never a merely neutral location. As a result, they set the agenda for the role of control within childhood spaces. James *et al.* focus on three spaces: the home, the school and the city, while Holloway and Valentine (2000) focus only on the home and the school. I return to this research in the methods section of Chapter Four. Each researcher's findings highlight that these spaces though apparently controlled by adults were also contested and resisted by children. In keeping with Massey's sense of place, these spaces were porous and not fixed in place. This concept of the Everyday has been developed within cultural studies, in particular within the work of Ben Highmore who writes:

> The heterogeneous and ambivalent landscape of everyday modernity needs investigating ... Everyday modernity begins to look like a patchwork of different times and spaces ... The everyday as poverty and oppression vies with the everyday as culturally rich and animated by festive forces. There is no comfort here for anyone wanting an "object" simply to celebrate or condemn (Highmore, 2002a: 2, 174).

Much of the importance of the 'everyday' is hidden, overlooked and therefore has to be excavated, and the role of the critic is to "make the invisible visible" (Highmore, 2002b: 2) by showing all that is ignored or denigrated by the dominant discourses of power and definition. Children's everyday lives are an example, and so are low-paid workers, immigrants or the homeless, as well as the material cultures and places that are 'traditionally' viewed as insignificant and unworthy of scrutiny or serious interpretation. As

Highmore writes, "to question everyday life and to allow everyday life to question our understanding of the world is to specifically invite a theoretical articulation of everyday life" (Highmore, 2002b: 3). The kind of 'theory' and its use in relation to everyday life, argues Highmore, will be different because it will have to be flexible in its relations with the dynamics of the everyday. He proposes a 'poetics' with its "ability to render the familiar strange" (*ibid.*), a theme discussed further in the methods section of Chapter Four. Like James *et al.* (1998), Highmore outlines a map of social dichotomies and states that any study of the 'everyday' will "navigate across these poles" (*ibid.*:5):

Particular	General
Agency	Structure
Experiences/Feelings	Institutions/Discourses
Resistance	Power
Micro-analysis	Macro-analysis

Spatial discourses

The third and final way to think about spatiality, though related, is different from the previous two approaches. Instead of considering how 'geographies' are important in shaping childhood, Holloway and Valentine (2000) present how constructions of childhood have shaped meanings of particular spaces (cf. James and Prout, 1998; Aitken, 2001). This construction of childhood has been outlined in detail in the introduction to this section. Holloway and Valentine discuss how constructions of the child as angel to be protected have been mobilised in the use of cyberspace. In this thesis, I have already discussed how these constructions, in particular in relation to the child – nature debate, have informed and moulded research on child – environment relations within the psychological strand of children's geographies.

Holloway and Valentine remind the reader that these three 'ways' are not separate but are interconnected and the authors conclude that:

> The processes shaping (and reshaped by) children's use of ICT were simultaneously global and local, material and ideological. It is these interconnections which we think could be fruitfully explored in an interdisciplinary approach to the new social studies of childhood which takes spatiality seriously (2000:779).

It is within this area that this thesis fits, focusing on meanings of land, though it is worth also stressing the reverse and that these interconnections could be fruitfully explored in an

interdisciplinary approach to the spatiality of everyday lives of children that takes the new social studies of childhood seriously. Not all research within the sociological strand of children's geographies is based on the concept of children as competent and social actors in their own right. For example, Lilly Kong (2000) invited Singaporean children to discuss their concept of nature, a topic she states is under-researched. Her article provides interesting insights into these particular children's thoughts on 'nature'. However, she also uses parents' perceptions to interpret children's views and designs a methodology around the statement that "children have a shorter attention span" (*ibid*: 234). Her interpretation of children's views in tandem with their parents', contradicts a fundamental concept within new social studies of childhood that children are competent social actors in creating meanings in their own lives (Kjørholt, 2001). In addition, the paradox of constructing children as competent social actors in the theoretical framework, then constructing children as less than adults in the methodological framework raises a methodological question within this thesis that I present as the third research question at the end of this chapter.

In this thesis, I build on Holloway and Valentine's use of the three ways of understanding children's everyday lives based on the typology of the importance of place, everyday spaces and spatial discourses. These researchers adopted the typology to both frame how children engage with their everyday environments and to analyse the data prior to fieldwork and data collection. In contrast, as I employ an emergent theory approach (cf. Charmaz, 2000), no framework was chosen from the outset, though interestingly, this typology arose during the analysis of the data and has proved useful in discussing and thinking through participants meanings of land in their everyday lives, as discussed in both Chapters Six (findings) and Chapter Seven (conclusions).

Section 3: Constructions of land and landscape

This section outlines the concept of land as employed and developed within cultural geography (Bender and Winer, 2001) and anthropology (cf. Ingold, 1986; Hirsch and O'Hanlon, 1999) as opposed to physical geography or ecology where the traditional focus is only on the materiality of the term The aim here is not to define the concept for participants to explore but to present a definition that is both multiple and fluid, thereby allowing for the binary oppositions outlined in the previous section to merge or remain split, depending on how participants explore and define the concept, themselves. In this chapter, the concept of everyday land is defined not by what it is but by what it is not: static, a visual mode, only material or immaterial and an object to study.

Background: cultural geography and the rise of place, space and power and the fall of landscape

The first traces of the study of different nations and cultures on Earth can be dated back to ancient geographers, such as Ptolemy or Strabo. Cultural geography as an academic study firstly emerged as an alternative to the environmental determinist theories of the early 20th Century, which believed that people and societies are controlled by the environment in which they develop (Peet, 1998). Rather than studying pre-determined regions based upon environmental classifications, such as Ellen Semple's work that since the 1920's has been criticised for its racist foundations (Crang, 1998), cultural geography became interested in cultural landscapes.

In 1925, Carl Sauer, a 'founding father' of American cultural geography introduced the term 'cultural landscape' in reaction to environmental determinism theories. In contrast, Sauer drew on the work of 19th Century European geographers, such as Alexander von Humboldt, who emphasised the two-way interaction or dialogue between physical landscapes and folk or national cultures. In turn, Sauer emphasised that culture shaped nature as much as the reverse and left its mark on the landscape. His 'superorganic' approach towards landscape focused on a totalising vision of culture as:

> ... something both of and beyond the participating members. Its totality is palpably greater than the sum of its parts, for it is superorganic and supra individual in nature, an entity with a structure, set of processes, and momentum of its own ... a culture practices us even more than we practice it. (Zelinsky, 1973: 41)

Sauer's work was qualitative and descriptive, though his work was surpassed in the 1930s by the regional geography of Richard Hartshorne, a German geographer who had fled Nazi Germany. Hartshorne (1939) was critical of the use of the word landscape, which he stated derived from the German work *landschaft*, which unlike the English term had two meanings ("a restricted piece of land and appearance of land as perceived"). He argued that using a term that had different meanings was confusing. His solution was to abandon the term landscape and move geography to a science of region and space. Cultural geography was pushed aside as the quantitative turn took hold. However, by the 1950s and 1960s, geographers in the United States of America had begun to focus their own work around Carl Sauer's basic definition of 'cultural landscape' with individuals like J. B. Jackson, founder of the magazine - *Landscape*, and cultural geographers such as Pierce Lewis, Donald Meinig and Yi-Fu Tuan, who began to argue that all landscapes were inherently cultural. In Sauer's definition of culture, everyday lives are less significant compared to the 'totality' and seem to have little or no agency within an overarching concept that precludes the importance of the social and decries the examination of "patterns of human behaviour, even when they affect the land" (Jackson, 1995: 19). In contrast, these writers focused on revealing the meaning of such unplanned or 'vernacular' landscape features as alleys, garages, parking lots, mobile homes, parks, highways and strip malls – what I term here the 'everyday' – as a way of extending and enhancing Sauer's work (cf. Meinig, 1979).

The Berkeley school was dominant in cultural landscape studies until the 1980s, when a new generation of geographers in the UK challenged Sauer's superorganic concept of landscape and argued for a more complex concept that recognised both the plurality of cultures and everyday lives (cf. Duncan, 1996). The British-orientated school of geography, known as the 'new cultural geography' (Duncan, 1980; Cosgrove, 1993), dismissed American cultural geography as "dominantly rural and antiquarian, narrowly focusing on physical artifacts (log cabins, fences, and field boundaries)" (Cosgrove and Jackson, 1987: 96). As with Hartshorne, they preferred a spatial and aesthetic approach to landscape as scenery (Duncan, 1990; Cosgrove, 1993; Cresswell, 2001). However, Jackson's work has always focused on the everyday and he also began to explore the landscapes of modernity. As with many cultural geographers, there was a shift away from rural and towards urban landscapes, in particular within everyday, ordinary landscapes (cf. McGrath, 1996). However, recently with the shift from the cultural turn to the spatial turn, (cf. Coleman and Crang, 2004; Thrift, 1999), the materiality of place has been reintroduced and there have been calls for geographers to move towards non-urban case studies, though the traditional concept of rural no longer embodies a fixed concept of place or inhabitants, and with a

more progressive sense of place (Massey, 1994), the concepts of urban and the rural have begun to merge. Since the 1980s, a 'new cultural geography' has emerged, drawing on a diverse set of theoretical traditions including Marxian political economy (cf. Harvey, 1989), feminist theory (cf. Rose, 1992; Valentine, 1999; Laurie, 1999), post-colonial theory (cf. Said, 1982), post-modernism (cf. Jackson, 1987) and post-structuralism (cf. Thomson, 1989). This widening field provides the theoretical space and place to present a more progressive concept of landscape that mirrors both Massey and Creswell's work on place.

In this thesis, the concepts of land and landscape are merged and intertwined with the concepts of everyday space, place and power. Here, I present the most open definition filled with radical possibilities (hooks, 1994) of meanings, as represented by the anthropologists Eric Hirsch and Jack O'Hanlon (2003), who reject the art historians' focus on landscape as a framing tool and the cultural geographers Barbara Bender and Margot Winer, who write in the introduction to the book *Contested Landscapes* "we wanted this book, like the landscapes we talk about, to be both open-ended and untidy" (2001: 3).

Discovering a progressive meaning of landscape

Cresswell (2000:12) states that, "Space, Landscape and Place are clearly highly interrelated terms and each definition is contested". His concepts of place and everyday space are represented in the discussions outlined in Section One, while his definition of landscape is:

> The idea has a particular history which dates back to the emergence of mercantile capitalism. Landscape painting emerged with the rediscovery of the science of optics, new techniques of navigation and the development of a new class of traders. Landscape refers to a portion of the earth's surface that can be viewed from one spot...landscape is an intensely visual idea. In most definitions of landscape the viewer is outside of it. This is the primary way in which it differs from place. Places are very much things to be inside of...(2000:10)

Landscape is a tricky term that produces different meanings (Cosgrove, 1983) and is neither a term claimed solely by any one discipline nor is it easily defined or divided into different camps (Muir, 1999). As Cresswell rightly states, these terms are contested, and in the following section I wish to contest his definition of landscape in four ways. The first point I contest is that the term landscape derives from European landscape painting alone. The second point is that landscape refers to the surface of the Earth and can be viewed from one spot, a concept developed from Western concepts of landscape based on an aesthetic approach (Muir, 2000). The third point is that landscape is an 'intensely visual

idea', where the concept of visual focuses on sight and not all our senses. The final concept that I contest is that landscapes differ from place in that the viewer is outside of the landscape looking in.

Landscape beyond European painting

> There are still those who would like to reserve the word landscape for a particular, elitist way of seeing, an imposing/imposed 'viewpoint' that emerged along, and as part of, the development of mercantile capital in Western Europe. But this is just one sort of landscape which, even for those who enjoyed a 'fine prospect', was partaken of in very different ways depending on finely graded and gender subtleties of class (Williams, 1973; Daniels and Cosgrove, 1993). Moreover this class-driven 'viewpoint' suppresses the landscapes of those being views or out of sight ... (Bender and Winer, 1998: 25)

It is normal for writers on landscape to note that the derivation of the world is often attributed to the Dutch form of the common northern European term designated as an area of territory – a province, district or region (cf. Punter, 1982; Cosgrove, 1993). When applied to the new genre of painting that emerged as the term which entered the English language in the 16th Century. The Danish geographer Kenneth Olwig spent ten years arguing for a more substantive meaning of landscape and stated that Cosgrove's approach "can be one-sided, and therefore, obscure the relation between the aesthetic form of landscape and its more substantive content." (1999:631)

Olwig's argument traces the term landscape through its use in Germany, Denmark and England. Like Lowenthal, Olwig's argues that landscape needs to be understood both historically and geographically. Here, the term *landskaft* merges with land, nature and natural environment, and embodies concepts of community, community justice, social estate, politics and law, in particular the on-going conflict between customary law as it evolved based upon daily practice through generations, and court law which was developed first by the monarchy then by the newly formed nation states to control and create good citizens, and to unify a diverse set of local cultures.

For Olwig, *landskaft* meant more than just territory and it also referred to estates (*landtag*) or the representative body, which were similar to the English estate of the commoners who formed the House of Commons. These estates of Land were made up of law-abiding tax-paying citizens who also had the right to vote and formed the powerful core of the

community. Pirenne (1958) states that these community bodies linked to a place identity were considered important at a time when the medieval ascetic ideal was being replaced by the idea of the active and engaged citizen. These bodies were political in nature and often moulded and maintained customary laws.

During the 16th Century, the conflict between the laws of the Roman Catholic church and the local customary laws began to be debated, in particular by the Huguenot, Francois Hotman (1524-1590), who 500 years before the cultural turn in academia, argued that the Roman laws which were held to be natural were in fact socially constructed. Hotman argued that customary laws were based on ancient precedents of 'time out of mind' that were updated through daily practice and custom. In contrast, Roman laws which were held to be universal were in fact a product of time and society (Jackson, 1974)). The concept of land and law was originally linked to user rights belonging to different groups, rather than the concept of property (Jones, 2006). In Europe, these customary laws based on lands use rights were formed before land was transformed into property and was a bounded area with a network of rights, determined by custom and personal feudal obligation. "the link between customary law, the institutions embodying that law, and the people enfranchised to participate in the making and administration of law is of fundamental importance to the root meaning, and therefore understanding, of land in *landschaft*" (Olwig, 1996: 640).

Olwig links the German concept of land and *landschaft* to the English term country or county that can be traced back to the 14th Century. The concept of country/county meant to represent the people when customary law defined the courts of the country. As the nation state began to rise in power, the parliament became more important in law-making (Bloch, 1982). During the political revolution of the 17th Century, a division was forged between the party of the court and the party of the country[10] (Zagorin, 1996). The party of the court began to employ landscape images to define itself in relation to the country (Orgel, 1975) and rather than use the northern European concept of *landschaft*, based around community and customary law, they commissioned landscape images based on principles from Rome that are most clearly represented in both Henry Peacham's woodcut of the Thames valley and his 1606 definition:

> Landskip is a Dutch word, & it is as much as wee shoulde say in English landship, or expressing of the land by hills, woodes, Castles, seas, valleys, ruines, hanging rocks, cites as far as maybe shewed within our Horizon (quoted in Ogden and Ogden, 1955:5)

[10] This is still evident in the use of the term 'going to the country' when political elections are called.

The king's court began to recreate the concepts of nature and law through landscape scenery brought to life in extravagant theatrical performance, designed and managed by Inigo Jones, the king's architect, painter and surveyor. He introduced ideas from the Italian art of nature with the monarch regally placed in the centre of all creation, who was led by the power of the natural sciences. At the same time the science of surveying and cartography were being developed in Renaissance Italy, based on Greek techniques developed by Ptolemy that drew on geometrical, divisible and hence saleable space that divided land in parcels of property.[11] The aesthetic concept of landscape developed from the same principles since cartography was a representation of a golden age created by royal presence. In the theatre, landscape was part of a theatrical performance, though as the court and monarchy saw their laws as natural and as an extension of the divine rights of the monarch within society, there was transference of the iconography of landscape in the theatre onto the English countryside.

As Cosgrove notes Palladian landscape[12] "was the vehicle by which this transfer from the theatre to the 'real' world was accomplished" (1993:20). This division of land by geometric cartography into parcels of property also created credibility for transformation of land into private property, enclosure of the commons, drainage of the land and became the investment of the newly formed merchant capital. As the commons became enclosed with hedges and ditches to mark boundaries, customary law maintained by daily practice lost power. Cloke, a champion of customary law, who built his own arguments on Hotman's support for customary laws found a powerful opponent in Frances Bacon, a man of both science and law, who proposed and introduced universal laws based on Roman logic and reason. The old Whigs who had defended customary law, based on traditional rights of use, now found these old laws impractical and counterproductive to the enclosure and agricultural improvements (Olwig, 1996).

The aesthetic concept of landscape created the template for the English country garden and large natural parks, often resulting in the clearing of villages and whole communities, which represented the conquering of the world. In addition, the history of the English landscape was rewritten and the role of community and customary land rights was overlaid

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[11] Original maps were developed during exploration of the world, in order to locate, conquer and claim new land for the monarchy (Harvey, 1995).

[12] This landscaping evolved from the work of Andrea Palladio (1508-1580) who transformed the land around Venice from Gothic to ancient Rome. Inigo Jones brought these ideas back from his travels and introduced the single point perspective in both art and landscaping. Cosgrove attributes Inigo's work to "creating one of the loveliest of the world's rural landscapes" (1984: 34).

by the path from classical Rome directly to the 17th Century (Lowenthal, 1981). Olwig's approach to studying landscapes is that:

> It is not enough to study landscape as a scenic text, a more substantive understanding of landscape is required. Such a substantive understanding of landscape derives, I would argue from the historical study of our changing conceptions and uses of land/landscapes, country/countryside and nature (Olwig, 1984; Jones, 1991; Demerritt, 1994; Williams, 1994). It is an understanding, furthermore, that cannot focus on the country or the city, but must incorporate the mutual definition and relations of both (Williams, 1973; Spirn, 1984; Cronon, 1991). Such an understanding recognizes the historical and contemporary importance of community, culture, law, and custom in shaping human geographical existence – in both idea and practice (1996: 645).

Landscape: from surface and static to movement and dialogue

Denis Cosgrove (Bender, 1993: 282) writes that, "Landscape is taken here in its broadest sense as the surface of the physical earth, the surface upon which humans live, which they transform and which they frequently seek to transcend". However, this notion of 'surface' presents a problem within the concept of 'landscape', for as Mike Crang suggests, "landscapes are not individual property; they reflect a society's – a culture's – beliefs, practices and technologies" (Crang, 1998: 15). Jackson wrote that the focus on landscape as surface is "unnecessarily limited" and an "excessively restrictive" view and the term is in need of revision (1995: 10). In contrast, Stephen Daniels wrote of the 'duplicity' of landscape as a cultural term, carrying meanings of surface and depth, solid earth and superficial scenery, natural and cultural, the ontological and the ideological (Daniels in Peet and Thrift, 1989). To him, this provided a "broadening of the purview of cultural geography" in which landscape was 'reinstated', "not despite its difficulty as a comprehensive or reliable concept, but because of it" (*ibid*: 196-7). He proposes that this 'duplicity' in landscape, could be seen as Adorno sees culture generally, as a 'dialectical image' – "an ambiguous synthesis whose redemptive and manipulative aspects cannot finally be disentangled, which can neither be completely reified as an authentic object in the world nor thoroughly dissolved as an ideological mirage" (Daniels in Peet and Thrift, 1989: 206). Daniels suggests that the reintroduction of landscape and its ambiguous dialectic is at the heart of a new cultural geography.

James Corner (1999) discusses 'recovering' of landscape "as both idea and artefact ...as an ongoing project, an enterprising venture that enriches the cultural world" (Corner, 1999:1).

The concept and use of the term 'landscape' has become increasingly utilised in a much broader, poetic sense, to signify a whole set of meanings and associations, such as the 'landscapes of the mind', the 'landscape of fear' or the 'landscape of loneliness'. These uses show the need for a wider definition of the notion of 'landscape' that would encompass more than 'land', defined as the 'surfaces of the Earth' or the 'visible terrain'. Daniels and Cosgrove argue that:

> A landscape is a cultural image, a pictorial way of representing, structuring or symbolizing surroundings. This is not to say that landscapes are immaterial. They have been represented in a variety of materials and on many surfaces – in paint on canvas, in writing on paper, in earth, stone, water and vegetation on the ground (1988:1).

Increasingly, this acceptance of the 'immaterial' has extended beyond the 'pictorial' and 'representational' view of landscape. Chris Philo terms this shift "dematerialized geography" (cf. Cook, Crouch *et al.*, 2000: 30) in contrast to the traditional geographic territory: "obvious, tangible, countable and mappable phenomena present to the senses (primarily sight)" (*ibid.*:30). The focus was 'human modifications' and 'human productions' on the environment and an 'aversion to the immaterial', as he puts it. However, Philo argues for balance between the two positions, "a vision sensitive to the complex fusings of material and immaterial" (*ibid.* 36). With the merging of the material and immaterial, the terms land and landscape can also be merged. As a result, I employ the term land throughout the thesis, though the term embodies landscape in its widest possible sense as outlined in this section.

Beyond landscape as the visual

Peirce Lewis famously wrote that we ought to define cultural landscape as nearly everything that we can see (1976)). But landscape is more than the visible surface, static and passive – "Landscape connotes a sense of the purposefully shaped, the sensual and aesthetic, the embeddedness in culture"(Whiston Spirn, 1998: 17). Philo's work also continues to employ the metaphors of vision, though the concept of environmental perception and the role of sight in interpretation have been of concern within human geography since the time Marsh wrote in 1864:

> Sight is a faculty; seeing, an art. The eye is a physical, but not a self-acting apparatus, and in general it sees only what it wants it seeks. Like a mirror, it reflects objects presented to it; but it may be as insensible as a mirror, and it does not necessarily perceive what it reflects (1865: 34).

In contrast, other geographers, such as Catherine Nash and Nigel Thrift extend the concept of landscape to include other modes of phenomenological experience and 'bodily practices' through which we encounter, 'read', relate and construct 'space'. Catherine Nash (2000) argues for 'performativity' and 'practices' as central to cultural geography, quoting Nigel Thrift's 'non-representational theory' which is "concerned with ... the performative 'presentations', 'showings' and 'manifestations' of everyday life" (1997:126-7). Thrift is critical of the overuse of the visual within geography. Instead, his work is concerned with "embodied, relational, expressive and involved with others and objects in a world continually in process" (Nash 2000: 655). Crang writes that "the idea of performance is important to us partly because it is embodied; it involves all the senses, including, but not confined to, sight" (p10). Nash's and Thrifts work presents the concept of humans being within landscape and place, which leads us back to the phenomenological concept of Heidegger's concept of belonging, mentioned in Chapter One. However, this sense of belonging is often linked to a fixed land/landscape and place, rather than Massey's concept of place and has been an increasingly contentious issue over the past century (Adams, 2004).

Landscape and power

How we define our selves, our countries or our neighbourhoods by reference to landscapes often reduces the concept of landscape back to a more static and nostalgic sense of 'belonging' (Aitken, 2001). Landscape as a sense of belonging in these terms is a form of essentialism, providing evidence of origins, entitlement and authenticity (Olwig, 1996). The connotations of the 'homeland' and of 'blood and soil' echo through much of the writings on landscape as a marker of identity and nationhood (cf. Gilroy, 1993; Adams, 2001). In the 21st Century there are tensions around this use of landscape with some writers emphasising the importance of sacred territory as the very core of their identity (cf. Jackson, 1999), whilst others focus on a sense of a mobile, global and hybridised identity where belonging to more than one place defines who they are (cf. Massey, 1994; Cresswell, 2003). Paul Gilroy rethinks how essential, racial 'roots' can be reconstructed into 'routes' and the multiple nature of experience. His book, *The Black Atlantic* (1993) questions the fixed and "overintegrated conceptions of culture" that promulgate nationalistic and essentialist notions of identity (*ibid.*: 1-2). Gilroy employs the concept of *Diaspora* as a "valuable idea [that] ... points towards a more refined and more worldly sense of culture than the characteristic notions of soil, landscape and rootedness" that are often used to fix national identity in very specific, boundaried concepts of place (Woodward 1997: 328). Olwig argues that Hartshorne's rejection of the term landscape was based upon his

experiences of pre-war Germany where "there is no doubt that the German conception of *Landschaft* was implicated in the promotion of the blood-and-soil fascist ideology" (1996 : 643) [13]. Cresswell conceptualises this concept well from a geographical perspective in his book *In place/Out of place* (1996), and highlights that for some people to be 'in a place' automatically excludes others and makes them 'out of place'. He writes that, "the text [here meaning place] is subject to multiple readings despite the fact that some readings are encouraged more than others", with some as 'normal, accepted' and others seen as 'heretical, abnormal readings' (*ibid.*). Krista Comer extends this approach towards landscape and writes that landscape is not "an empty field of vision (the premise of perceptual geography) but rather a brimming-full social topography that creates and enacts the various cultural assumptions and power struggles of the age"(1999: 13).

The most prolific writer on landscape and power, W.J Mitchell, proposes that landscape is multiple and ideological, and through becoming part of the everyday, the taken-for-granted, the objective and the natural, the landscape masks the artifice and ideological nature of its form and content. Its history as a social construction is unexamined. It is therefore, as unwittingly read as it is unwittingly written (Duncan, 1990: 19), bringing us to the work of the geographer David Lowenthal who has written extensively on the use and abuse of history in meaning-making of cultural landscapes. In his seminal book *The past is a foreign country* (1984), he highlights the constructed nature of the historical past in understanding our present world, though he does not call for a rejection of the role of history but to use its constructed nature to emancipate our understanding of the meanings of landscape. Landscape within phenomenological approaches focuses on embodied sense of power, where humans are not outside of landscape nor passive subjects to its control.

For Ingold, the landscape equals the taskscape in its embodied form. Thus, the landscape is always becoming and is never at rest and participants "make their way through a field of related practices - or what I have elsewhere called a 'taskscape' " (Ingold, 1993b:158; cf. Edensor, 2006). The notion of taskscape refers to the ways humans routinely inscribe themselves in space, by using, inhabiting and moving through it. "Just as the landscape is an array of related features so – by analogy – the taskscape is an array of related activities" (Ingold, 2000:195). The concept of taskscape highlights that participants enacted

[13] Identities form an important focus within cultural landscapes since identities are formed through this process of giving meaning to the world, though the concept is heterogeneous and cannot be "definitively interpreted once and for all for every person" (Shields, 1991:18) and it is therefore 'plural' Both culture and landscape, as Anne Whiston Spirn (1998) advocates, are inherently dialogical, 'shuttling' between material and immaterial, perception and presence, human and non-human, as spatial heterogeneity, mixing, crossing-over, contradicting, processive - and always unfinished.

corporally and multi-sensually, routinely and creatively with landscapes. Ingold's concept of landscape as dwelling links knowledge of a place to the past and not only to the present, and throughout this engagement humans create meanings of these landscapes, which are also closely linked to the practices of past generations and the social co-existence, which can reshape the landscape.

Bender and Winer present a useful definition of landscape for this thesis when they write:

> ... If, instead of this narrow definition [of landscape based on European paintings], we broaden the idea of landscape and understand it to be the way in which people – all people – understand and engage with the material world around them, and we recognise that people's being-in-the-world is always historically and spatially contingent, it becomes clear that landscapes are always in process, potentially conflicted, untidy and uneasy (1998: 25)

Research questions

Throughout this chapter, a narrative evolves that the construction of both 'child' and 'land' are rarely about the individual or the object, but that they embody the inscription of dominant political codes onto each one (Aitken, 2001). The aim of this chapter was to provide the context for the research questions, which have been placed within the field of children's geographies that build on the new social studies of childhood (Holloway and Valentine, 2000), by introducing the importance of place, everyday space and spatial discourses (Laurie *et al.*, 1995). Stuart Aitken's (2001) discusses the moral spaces of childhood and calls for all researchers to provide these individuals with both the space and time to express their own voices. Aitken's moral framework fits well with the concept of voicing (Denzin and Lincoln, 2002) as outlined in Chapter One and supports a participatory research approach, which was the founding principle of this thesis. Based upon a participatory approach, where the participants are invited to define the research topic themselves and due to the untidy nature of land/landscape, the first research question is exploratory in nature, while the second question places participants' meanings of land within existing literature on land/landscape, as outlined in Section Two:

1. How do groups of 'children' in the Outer Hebrides, Scotland define 'land' in their everyday lives?
2. How do participants' meanings compare and contrast with the literature on current research into human relationships with everyday land/landscapes?

The final question is methodological in nature as outlined on page 18 and explores the potential paradox between designing participatory research methods specifically for children within the new social studies of childhood:

3. Do participatory methods designed specifically for children perpetuate the concept of child as 'other'?

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological framework and not the methods. The methods are presented and discussed in Chapter Four. There are two sections in this Chapter. Section One outlines the current discourses and criticisms around the use of participatory methodologies, in particular the post-structuralist criticism that Participation is power and needs to be resisted or that Participation is about empowerment and involves circumnavigating power and creating 'ideal speech' and power-free situations (Habermas, 1980) for participants. Here, I build on Kesby's concept of participation as spatial practice (1999) that merges the definitions of power and empowerment together and provides the concept of empowerment as performance. In Section Two, I present and answer the third research question, which is methodological in nature, and in contrast to most research guidelines for research with children (cf. Alderson and Morrow, 2004) I outline why I chose not to design methods specifically for children.

Section 1: Participation as spatial practice and empowerment as performance

Participatory research has three key elements: *people, power* and *praxis* (Fin, 1994; Songh, 1995). *People* are at the centre of the research process (Brown, 1985) in the sense that the process of critical enquiry is informed by and responds to the experiences and needs of the people involved (the participants). In participating in research, an individual or a group becomes the subject (the participant) and not the object in the pursuit of knowledge.[1] *Power* is pivotal to the construction of reality, language, meanings and rituals of truth; power functions in all knowledge and in every definition. According to Foucault, power is knowledge and knowledge creates truth and therefore power (1980), though the definitions and use of power differ amongst researchers, as discussed later in this section. Participatory research is also about *praxis* and recognises the merging of theory and

[1] Inviting the individual in as a subject and not as an object embodies a number of key aims. Participation honours local knowledge about life circumstances and coping strategies (Chambers, 1995) and therefore changes the role of the researcher from one of 'expert' to one of facilitator and learner, and provides a 'view from below' (Mies, 1996: 13). Participation can also be a catalyst for working towards social justice (Carniol, 2000) and has been argued to be a basic human right (Collins, 2005).

practice, and the critical awareness of the personal – political dialectic, though this area has been neglected (Kesby, 2005).

The turn towards participatory methodologies has increased recently in line with attempts to include minority voices including those of children. This has involved many movements (from developing to developed countries; rural to urban; fields to boardrooms; minority voices to more prominent voices), considerable evolution and a plethora of acronyms, as outlined in the following pages. Within development studies, where Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)[2] evolved (Chambers, 1997), this methodology is seen as political in nature (Long and van der Ploeg, 1994) and as such is neither inherently neutral nor objective. Although it would be misleading to present this area as homogeneous with no internal conflicts, a unifying feature has been the focus on power relations and their transformation in and through participatory approaches (Chambers, 1998; 2001). The influence of social structures is widely recognised within this research area, though the question of the most appropriate level at which transformation should take place raises the fiercest debates (Hickey and Mohan, 2005).

The level of transformation that this thesis focuses upon – participatory practice and praxis – is criticised by researchers who adopt a Marxist or structuralist approach and believe that the research practice within the workshops to be an ineffectual site to transform power (cf. Kapoor, 2002; Kumar and Corebridge, 2002). These localised levels of participation have been condemned as new forms of colonisation and tyranny (Cook and Kothari, 2001) since inviting people to speak out when they remain within existing power structures achieves nothing except raise expectations and increase feelings of exclusion. These criticisms are not without merit (Hickey and Mohan, 2005); when a political research philosophy becomes a box of tools, workshop findings are taken out of context and used by policymakers for their own needs (Thomson, 2007). However, as Cornwall (2004) argues, many of these critics misunderstand the rationale behind these methodologies, which aim to allow participants to say what they know and contest the hegemony of 'experts' to build countervailing knowledge that recognises people's lived experiences. Cornwall's assertion is not sufficient to displace more radical criticisms and a deeper discussion on the nature of power and empowerment is required. Before expanding on this issue and introducing a more spatial understanding of participation, I will briefly outline the political roots of

[2] As these techniques moved into urban environments, the term rural was removed and the acronym has been changed to PA (Participatory Appraisal)

participatory research and the current critique surrounding these methodologies and methods.

Background

Participatory methodologies arose from within international development studies, and are the foundation of my own participatory training and initial research experience within social forestry in Papua New Guinea (cf. Thomson, 1996). My subsequent professional research has been within the UK context (cf. Scottish Executive, 2005), though I continue to draw upon theoretical and empirical discussions within the international development context (cf. Cornwall, 2000; Kesby, 2005). One of the main participatory approaches, Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), has been defined as part of:

> A family of participatory approaches and methods which emphasise local knowledge and enable local people to do their own appraisal, analysis and planning. PRA uses group animation and exercises to facilitate information sharing, analysis and action among stakeholders (World Bank, 1995: 175).

These methodologies and tools of enquiry for community development aim to invite more silenced voices to talk, and began to develop in the 1970s and early 1980s with the work on a process called Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA). This work was carried out predominantly in universities, such as the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) at the University of Sussex in the UK and the Khon Kaen University in Thailand. This approach was based upon the ideologies of Robert Chambers (1983), who is based at IDS, and the development of both RRA and PRA were moulded by his critique of conventional development practice and manifest three main origins (Brown *et al.*, 2003). The first origin came from dissatisfaction with the social biases of rural development tourism that perpetuated Western forms of knowledge and concepts of economic development. The second origin evolved from disillusion with the normal processes of questionnaire surveys and their results that focused on the researcher's expertise and tended to ignore more localised forms of knowledge. The final origin evolved from the cash poor research contexts and the need for more cost-effective methods of learning.

Initially, RRA was based on external learning and often referred to as extractive or elicitive, though from the mid 1980s RRA was seen to be part of an inclusive participatory development. It was eventually superseded by PRA after criticisms that RRA was

undertaken too quickly and there was little time for reflection by participants (Cornwall, 2002). The core principles of PRA have been identified by Chambers (1997) as:

1. 'Handing over the stick'; surrendering authority to local people in learning processes.
2. A self-critical awareness: critical examination by and of facilitators of their own roles and learning.
3. Personal responsibility: 'use your own best judgement at all times'.
4. Sharing of ideas and information widely.

Both Chambers (1992) and Weber and Ison (1995) believe that the stimulation of community awareness around the issues under discussion is central to PRA's aims. From these foundations the concept evolved that PRA was superior to conventional research and development techniques due to three main reasons (Brown *et al.*, 2003). The first reason was the focus on reversing the learning process as the 'poor' and marginalised became the experts on their lives and the researcher became the facilitator in developing these views rather than being the expert. This process incorporated visual rather than verbal techniques that involved sharing of ideas among the group, and did not rely on individual written word-based literacy (Pant-Robinson, 1995). The second reason was that by reversing the learning process, PRA privileges local constructions of knowledge (Gaventa, 1999). The final reason was that these methods are a form of action research, where the aim is not only on increasing understanding but also on local empowerment and social change (Chambers, 1997), though the definition of empowerment continues to be debated.

The popularity of PRA has evolved over the years and has morphed into Participatory Learning and Action (PLA), which now recognises that central to participatory research, is the learning process where research is not just about gathering facts but also about developing an understanding of oneself and one's context (Songh, 2000). The focus is on understanding how to learn and on encouraging participants and researchers to become self-sufficient learners and evaluate knowledge that others generate. The concept shares similar ideologies as learner-centred teaching (Campbell and Kryszewska, 1992), also building on Paolo Freire's work on critical pedagogy (1970). Freire was the key theorist underpinning radical participatory research. A key part of good participatory research lies in developing relationships between the researcher and participants and in supporting the collection and analysis of research data (Songh, 2000). However, there is no off-the-shelf formula, step-by-step method or 'correct way' to do participatory research. Rather,

participatory methodologies are best described as a set of principles and a process of engagement in an inquiry (Baker Collins, 2005).

PRA and other 'cognate tools' have been the preferred methods for participatory development since 1983, and more recently have been widely adopted by development agencies due to the ease of their use, which makes them the ideal outreach tools (Brown *et al.*, 2003). However, this focus on the methods as a box of tools was not intended by Chambers (1997: 188), who states:

> ... a new high ground, a paradigm of people as people. RRA fits a cybernetic model of fast feedback in conditions of rapid change. Good PRA goes further, in empowering lowers. Its principles, precepts and practices resonate with parallel evolutions in the natural sciences, chaos and complexity theories, the social sciences and post-modernism, and business management ... On the new high ground, decentralisation, democracy, diversity and dynamism combine ...

While participatory proponents have been critical of the mainstreaming of these methodologies (cf. Cornwall, 2000; Kothari, 2001), criticisms of PRA techniques also began to gain momentum since the start of the 21st Century (cf. Cooke and Kothari, 2001). Chambers as quoted above, offers researchers a new paradigm in research, though some researchers believe that the benefits have been more often asserted than demonstrated (Brown *et al.*, 2003). These criticisms deconstruct the three main benefits of these methodologies, as outlined previously in this section, and highlight the darker side to each one. First, with the shift from being expert to facilitator, researchers may wrongly believe that they now hold a neutral role within the process, though they continue to construct and mould knowledge production by introducing discourses of 'peer equality' and empowerment (Kesby, 2003). In addition, the focus on visual techniques rather than verbal techniques as more appropriate (or less culturally biased) is a myth, since tools such as mapping, as discussed in Chapter Two and timelines are laden with Western ways of knowing (Thomson, 1996; Kesby, 2007). Second, by reversing the learning process and focusing on local knowledge alone, outside influences are ignored and a limited perspective is presented (cf. Pain, 2000). Finally, the focus on the action component within participatory approaches and the claim for empowering communities receives the most radical criticism. This is outlined below.

Critics of participatory methodologies tend to be in two camps. The first group includes supporters of these methodologies and aims to improve its critique and rigour as a method.

Most of these critics come from within the "self-critical awareness/epistemological awareness", which theorists believe is an important part of its development (Chambers, 1997: 32). The second group which is more recent with its criticisms is more radical in nature and aims to displace claims of participation as empowerment. The most scathing critique has been led by Cook and Kothari (2000) in their book *The Tyranny of Participation*. Here the authors argue that advocates of participation are deluded in their view that participation circumnavigates power and conclude that participation is a form of power and as such can only be resisted. These critics adopt a post-structuralist critique and state that participation is a negative form of power. In contrast, researchers such as Allen (2003) take an opposing view that participation does circumnavigate power and focuses on empowerment thereby creating free spaces for 'ideal speech situations' (Habermas, 1980). Allen's work (2003) proposes more nuanced versions of power, ranging from domination, coercion, authority, manipulation, inducement to seduction (Kesby, 2007). The first two are blatantly inappropriate uses of power while the next two are more subtle and the last two are more modest. It is this difference in power that impacts on how participants can negotiate the research space and side-step power in certain situations. This binary split in concepts of power within participatory research is at the heart of disagreements over the status and use of participatory methodologies (*ibid*).

The geographer Mike Kesby (2007) adopts a different approach and attempts to merge the post-structuralist critique with participatory methods in two ways. First, he explores the concept of power and merges this definition with a redefined concept of empowerment where neither is a purist nor polarised definition; where neither power is only about domination nor is empowerment about free will to do as we please[3]. Secondly, Kesby (1999) introduces the concept of spatiality within participatory methodologies, building on inter-subjectivity of meaning-making, rather than *an* agency *or* structure approach, which leads to the concept that empowerment is performance.

Moving beyond the impasse of power or empowerment

In order to move beyond the impasse of having to claim that empowerment is impossible because power is everywhere (Karachi, 2001) or dispute that power is everywhere in order to make room for empowerment (Allen, 2003), Kesby (2007) proposes that two issues

[3] Kesby's thinking emerged from his own experience on work with HIV in Zimbabwe. My own thinking emerged from my MSc research with forest communities in Papua New Guinea and experience as an EFL teacher and was further developed within this thesis. As with Kesby, compared to the diverse fields of participatory approaches my experience is obviously particular and my focus may, I know, fall short of the highest levels of participation to which advocates might aspire. The focus of this research may also add to the shallow thinking that surrounds participatory research, though as Kesby states, these argument move beyond the polarised stance that if done properly participation works or participation is power and must be resisted.

need to be addressed. The first issue involves having a clearer understanding of how agency works and how it is constituted. The focus on both structure and agency within the concept of intersubjectivity has already been addressed in Chapter Two, though it is worth expanding this discussion within the context of participatory research. Judith Butler (1993) argues that agency is performance through everyday discourses, though her focus on agency only has been criticised by Nelson (1999), Thrift (2000) and Thrift and Dewsbury (2000). Agency as performance is also historically and contextually embedded within the 'everyday' that draws on established ways of knowing, in order to make sense of the world around us (Pratt, 2000; Cleaver, 2004). This process is often habitual and beyond self-scrutiny (cf. Bordieu, 1994), and even when an individual is self-reflexive, consciousness is forever contextually situated (Cleaver, 2004; Kesby, 2005). As a result, improvisation of meanings always includes a 'vast archive' and performativity is always in some way scripted (Thrift, 2000b). However, people draw on their own agency to "utilise an array of resources in a myriad logical and/or contradictory combination" (Kesby, 2007: 25). Within this understanding of meaning-making, agency is "dynamic, strategic and capable of producing hybridity and the ontologically new, yet at the same time that is socially constructed, partial, situated, and achieved through available resources". (*ibid*, 2007: 26).

The second issue according to Kesby (2007) that needs to be addressed is to consider that power and empowerment are more alike rather than different, and move towards a reconceptualisation where empowerment is not thought of as the release of authentic freewill which has been crushed by power, but as the social production of agency and consciousness in a new 'associational' guise (Cameron and Gibson, 2005). People are inventive though they often lack the resources to actually resist power or to redefine their situation (cf. Thrift, 1999). Kesby builds on Allen's concept of power, though he criticises his focus on agency over structure. In this thesis, I find Adams' theories of identity formation in meaning-making more useful. Adams builds on the hybrid theories of McNay (1999, 2000), Adkin (2003) and Sweetman (2003) to produce a hybrid identity theory based on Giddens' structuration theory (reflexivity) and Bordieu's habitus (social identity). As Adams is a sociologist researching on class issues, a hybrid theory recognising unequal power relations is a core concern for him. The key aspect of his theory is the concept of *post-reflexive choice:* the concept that an individual's reflexivity is not sufficient to make changes if they do not have the resources available (Craib, 1992). I return to Adams' theories in Section Two of this chapter.

By merging the post-structuralist critiques with participatory methodologies, participation becomes partial, situated and contestable in nature and is open to challenge and transformation. Participatory methodologies have inevitable flaws, but if a researcher is transparent about their advantages and disadvantages, they offer one way of creating spaces for individuals' voices and to push the limits of situated knowledge.[4] Since Lowenthal (1989) highlights, the constructed nature of history can emancipate our understanding of the past, participatory researchers can find emancipation in understanding the constructed nature of the meanings created within the participatory spaces.

Participation as spatial practice

In order to provide a clearer understanding of participation as a form of intersubjectivity, where power is a relationship (Hawthorne, 1997) and not a commodity to be dispensed by the more powerful to the less powerful, I outline here the concept of participation as spatial practice (Kesby, 1997), which builds on the concept of space as neither neutral nor objective as outlined in Chapter Two.

The idea of participation, within this thesis, builds on my previous research methodology and methods (Thomson, 1996) and is considered as spatial practice (Kesby, 1999). Here spaces and channels are designed to invite individuals and groups to define, discuss and contest, if they wish, issues based on their own life experiences (Chambers, 1997). Each individual is recognised and heard, as a competent social actor in creating meanings from their everyday experiences. Participation as spatial practice has been grouped further by Brock, Gaventa and Cornwall (2003) into three categories: closed spaces, invited spaces and claimed/created spaces. In closed spaces participants are invited into decision-making spaces, where some decisions have been made and boundaries set. I would propose that in workshops or in the field, closed spaces are where the researchers have defined the problem, the concepts, chosen a fixed set of tools, drawn up the worksheets and have then invited participants to fill in the gaps. Invited spaces are where participants are invited to participate by various authorities, for example from the government, perhaps for a one-off consultation process. Claimed/created spaces are 'organic' in nature, difficult to plan and are the most difficult to achieve. While closed and invited spaces are directed by researchers, the third space requires participants to engage with and, as labelled, claim the space for themselves (Cornwall, 2002).

[4] Many participatory techniques are no longer indigenous (Mohan, 2001), though in our hybrid and global world, and where place is viewed beyond the immediate physical locality (Massey, 1997), this purist focus seems less important than whether these techniques are useful in providing a space for people to talk within their everyday lives (Sylvester,1995).

The underlying issue within claimed/created spaces is the power relations within the space, both physical and emotional, between the researcher and participants and amongst the participants. "Power is not only a social resource to be distributed, say like bread or automobiles. It is also a socio-cultural grid of interpretation and communication" (Benhabib, 2002: 23). Power is a relationship (Hawthorne, 1997) enacted within everyday lives, not a Machiavellian ball passed from the more powerful to the powerless, a scarce resource wielded by the hierarchical few (Thomson, 2007). Power cannot be resisted as proposed by Kothari (2001), but must be engaged with (Kesby, 2005). "Neither is power inherently negative, limiting or repressive; rather it is inherently productive of actions, effects and subjects, even when most oppressive" (*ibid*, 2005: 2040). As such, participants can neither be empowered by the researcher, nor do they necessarily empower themselves.

Participation as spatial practice that recognises power as a relationship (Hawthorne, 1997) involves continual interaction and negotiation between all participants, including the researcher. Claimed/created spaces are never empty and can be filled with old or new power (Cornwall, 2002). They are not static but are filled with 'radical possibility' (hooks, 1990:23). It is this third space (Soya, 1996) and the concept of power as a relationship (Hawthorne, 2002) that I focus on in this thesis and return to it in the next section, where I present the third research question and the paradox of constructing children as competent social actors in the theoretical framework, but then constructing children as less than or different from adults, in the methodological framework.

Outline of Methods

From the outset of this chapter, participatory approaches and research have been defined not as a set of fixed procedures but as a set of principles and guidelines (Baker Collins, 2005). The guidelines developed for this thesis are based around the concept of participation as spatial practice with a focus on the unfolding of methods within the research space that is constructed by the researcher as facilitator and the participants as they collect and analyse their own data (Cornwall, 2000). Here I outline the rationale behind the methods chosen, that provides a context for Section Two of this chapter, where I present the third research question. I outline in detail the research process in Chapter Four. The methods developed build on my research in Papua New Guinea (cf. Thomson, 1996) and involve two main stages. The first stage involves an artist-in-residence project over four weeks, where participants were invited to define, explore and analyse their concept of land within their everyday lives. The second stage is led by the first stage and

involves using ethnographic techniques and historical analysis. The participatory guidelines developed in this thesis recognise the three main benefits of participatory research and three criticisms, as laid out earlier in this chapter.

Stage one: artist in residency project

The first benefit of participatory research is that individuals are the subjects and not the objects of research (Chambers, 1997), as such participants are invited to the research process and become 'co-researchers' (Jackson, 1999). However, recognising that the researcher moulds the research aims and objectives, and ultimately interprets the final analysis, participants remain 'secondary co-researchers'. Participation as process is widely recognised as a learning process[5], though one of the main problems of participatory research is the lack of theorisation (Pain, 2000; Kesby, 2005). With the focus on the process of learning, I build on educational theories, in particular learner-centred teaching that focuses on the process as a whole and the methods as a series of steps, as described in Chapter Four. Within this thesis, there is also a specific focus on everyday lives where the aim is to make the familiar strange and the strange familiar (Highmore, 1999).

The main challenge in framing the research methods was how to invite participants to reflect on their everyday lives without leading their definition of land, and how to provide an aim for the workshops. The final solution was to frame the methods within an artist-in-residence project.

Stage two: wider fieldwork (ethnographic and historical methods)

The second, and significant, criticism of participatory research and in particular within human geography, is that there is too much focus on the local at the expense of wider influences (Pain, 2000; Kesby, 2005). In recognising wider structural influences the researcher's knowledge and role can be integrated within a secondary phase, by using ethnographic techniques that also involve exploring the historical background of island life. The concept that the researcher is a neutral bystander has been rejected, though with the concept of power as a relationship (Hawthorne, 1997) the researcher does not necessarily lead meaning-making within the research space. In order to maintain the underlying concept that the data evolved from participants' own meanings of land, rather than the researcher determining the issues, only issues raised by participants within the workshops

[5] As such the methods developed do not focus solely on data collection alone but aim to develop good relationships with participants that leads to high quality and authentic data collection by participants. Within participatory approaches there has traditionally been an over emphasis on visual techniques as though they somehow hold a special place that the written text does not. (Monaghan, 1999)

were explored further. However, some of the more interesting issues revolve around topics that islanders and academics consider to be important to island life, for example the Free Church and the land raids in the 19th Century (cf. Johnstone, 2000). These issues are discussed further in the findings presented in Chapter Six.

Doctoral thesis: advantages and limitations

The final considerations that frame this thesis are the advantages and limitations involved within a doctoral research project. Johnston (1999), states that participants should be involved at each stage of the research process. However as Macredie (2001) highlights, it is necessary for a doctoral thesis to set the aims and objectives from the outset but this approach does not prevent flexibility within the process (Collins Baker, 2005), which in this thesis bolsters the rationale for allowing participants to define *land* themselves. One advantage for a doctoral thesis is the time available that is usually not always allowed within shorter research projects, though time is inevitably a scarce resource and this issue is discussed in Chapter Four. Another advantage usually is that there is no funding body looking for set outcomes; in contrast my thesis benefited from having a government funding body (the UK Economic and Social Research Council) that was both flexible and supportive in its approach, and funded my trip to Norway which provided the inspiration for my third research question.

Paradoxical spaces: setting the third research question

Empowerment is best understood as performance where following post-structural arguments it is not a commodity but an *effect* resulting from the deployment of resources (cf. Foucault, 1980). One of the main theorists on this topic, Judith Butler avoids all discussion around the material context of such spaces (Thrift and Dewsbury, 2000), though the spaces of participation through which post-reflexive choice occurs require a context (Kesby, 2007) and this is the crux of participatory methodologies. With these spaces, whether in a bush hut in Papua New Guinea or a school in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland, the frameworks are not the same as everyday spaces as encountered by participants (*ibid*). New resources and discourse are brought in by the researcher and by and between participants (Cornwall, 2001). Resources such as 'free speech', 'peer equality' and 'collaboration' are introduced to help facilitate a space where people are invited to share their views on a chosen topic. The issues under discussion may be considered normal within everyday life but the aim is to make the familiar strange and the strange familiar (Highmore, 1999) in order to allow participants the time and space to think through issues (Thomson, 2007). As such these spaces aim to create a safe arena for

discussion beyond locally dominant powers and within which ideas can be contested. As outlined earlier, some advocates of participatory approaches aim for an 'ideal speech situation' (Habermas, 1990; Kapoor, 2002) which are according to Rose (1993) 'paradoxical spaces' as proponents claim to provide a power-free space for discussion but, as outlined in Chapter Two, spaces are never neutral (James *et al.*, 1996).

Kesby (2007) states that inequalities are never entirely removed within participatory spaces and that while these spaces aim to transform everyday power relations, these relations continue to impact on participants' actions within the research spaces. As such, Kesby highlights a second paradox that empowered performances within these spaces are curtailed by relations constituted elsewhere and further afield. For example, an individual may worry about the consequences of their opinions or may see no benefit in being involved in the participatory process. Kesby extends his discussion by assessing how researchers can, rather than circumnavigate these power relations, facilitate empowerment beyond the research space. I return to this issue in the final chapter of this thesis, where I reverse the question and ask whether outside of the new social studies of childhood and children's geographies there is a platform and space for the voices of these individuals, who hold the social identity of 'child', where they are considered to hold the potential to express their own thoughts. However, for now I wish to explore Kesby's assertion that inequalities are never evened-out in research spaces and how this belief has moulded participatory research with children and where children have methodologies specially designed for them based on the view that children are different from adults.

Section 2: Designing participatory methods for participants with multiple identities not individuals defined as 'children'

Currently within research with children there is a general pattern to design research methods specifically for children for three main reasons. This approach has created a discussion around whether research with children is different from that with adults, though there has been less focus on the methodological questions, as outlined by Samantha Punch (2003). In this thesis, and in contrast to most research with children, I chose not to design participatory methods specifically for children, which sparked an interesting discussion controversial in nature that merited a research question: Do participatory methods designed specifically for children perpetuate the concept of child as 'other'?

In this section, I do not seek to present new insights on methods, but attempt to investigate more thoroughly the methodological question: is doing research with children different from doing research with adults? Samantha Punch opens space for my argument by asking: "[i]f children are competent social actors, why are special 'child-friendly' methods needed to communicate with them?" (Punch, 2002: 321) and by highlighting that a significant amount of discussion focuses on ethics with children and less so on methodologies. While these are important questions, I am concerned that Punch's paper reiterates a more general tendency to employ a metanarrative of children that is based on the polarised, fixed and separated identities of child and adult. I question the usefulness of such categories on the basis that individuals' identities have increasingly been recognised as constructed through a diverse web of overlapping subjectivities and that identity is something we 'do' and not 'have'. Given this, why do we still so often use fixed definitions of identity when it comes to our work with children?

I shine a spotlight briefly on the action of doing (and therefore designing) research, *not* on the validity of doing research with a diverse group of individuals. I do not seek to question research into the construction of childhood (Jenks, 2001) nor the structural categories of childhood (Qvortrup, 1994) from which I also draw. Rather, drawing on hybrid, intersubjectivity theories of identity that recognise the interplay between social structural influences and an individual's own agency/reflexivity, I question the myth of the competent all-powerful adult (Lee, 2001) and its necessary other, the incompetent child. My argument is that if researchers believe that individuals, including those who are stamped with the label 'child', are competent social actors in their own lives, then this competence needs to be extended to our understanding of the process of identity formation. Accordingly, imposing the fixed and singular label of child or adult to a research method counteracts this philosophy, particularly within participatory research methodologies. However, my aim is not to argue that each of us is the same competent individual over time but rather that we are in fact individuals with multiple fluid identities (Benhabib, 2002) who are human *becomings* not human *beings* (Freire, 1993) in an increasingly fragmented social and political world (Piciotto, 1997).

Raising the question: why is doing research with children different from adults?

Working with children is not something I aspired to as a researcher. As a participatory practitioner and researcher, my interests focus on accessing minority voices and in particular the concept of voicing (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005): an understanding that giving

someone a seat at the table does not automatically provide them with the power or resources to speak or to be listened (Alderson, 2000; John, 2003; Cornwall, 2004). As a field researcher, my interest and focus has been on everyday lived spaces, specifically at the micro-level of the workshop or when out in the field, and on power negotiations between the researcher and participants, which I view, along with the anthropologist Andrea Cornwall (2004) and geographer Mike Kesby (1999, 2005), as spatial practice.

Within my PhD research, I attempted to provide a space for reflection and invited participants to be artist-in-residence on the topic of 'land' in the Outer Hebrides, Scotland. While designing a series of participatory workshops, where my training and experience lies, I talked with other practitioners, more experienced in working with children, and read books on the topics of doing research with children (cf. Fraser *et al.*, 2004), ethics with children (cf. Alderson, 2001), interacting with children (cf. Alderson, 1999), interviewing children (cf. Punch, 1998), etc. What struck me continuously was that I could see no difference between these authors' proposals and how I approached and designed participatory workshops, as a researcher to learner-centred 'adult' classes in my former role as an English language teacher[6]. Every difference cited in the available literature, such as lack of physical stature, attention span and confidence was an issue I had encountered when working with different 'adults'. Observations made during classes and fieldwork[7] on the complex identities within the research space, had led me to develop a highly participatory approach. While designing and implementing workshops in the Outer Hebrides, I continued to approach my fieldwork in exactly the same way as I had previous research, despite the advice of primary school teachers, colleagues and the literature, which suggested that work with children needed in some larger or smaller way to be different. When working with children I continually asked myself whether I would design/carry out the workshops differently for 'non-children', and almost always my answer was 'no'. There was one difference, an exception that somewhat proves the point: I had to ask for permission from a parent or guardian to use video and photography in the workshops, because legally participants under 16 years of age were unable to grant this permission themselves.

[6] Two years in Mongolia with no resources except my students' own lived experiences, interests and enthusiasm had led me to develop a style of teaching called 'learner-centred teaching' (Campbell and Kryszewska, 1992).

[7] In particular, my MSc fieldwork with forest communities in Papua New Guinea (Thomson, 1996).

The Pantomime debate: Oh no they don't ... Oh yes they do?

Various colleagues continue to challenge my methodological stand. When defending my rejection for the need to impose the fixed and polarised identities of adult or child on my methodology, I initially responded by citing the similarity of the issues faced by researchers working with either adults or children. The length of my proposed workshops (given what was seen as the inherently short attention span of a child) was continually raised, especially by primary school teachers, but I have never experienced this as a problem.[8] Within adult education, a learner's attention span and motivation is linked to how meaningful the information is to the individual's own life, not their age (Edwards, 1997). However, a constant process of claim and counter claim: 'but children do this ...' versus 'well, this could equally apply to adults...' is potentially inexhaustible and cyclical in nature, and can prevent moving discussions forward.

On reflection, I realised that my response was itself employing the polarised, singular and fixed identities of child vs adult that I was attempting to dissolve. To break the deadlock I needed to adopt a different approach to these discussions. I knew that my epistemological approach to 'doing research with children' must be different from those who strongly questioned my methodological approach though I was failing to articulate my rationale. After some reflection, I realised that it was my participatory philosophy that separated me from my critics and which I had failed to communicate because it was so inherent to my understanding.

A participatory researcher working with 'children' or a child researcher employing participatory methods?

In planning my PhD thesis on *people's* relationships with land, my interest focused on exploring with participants, different constructions of nature in the form of land; allowing them to define and explore the concept themselves. As little research adopts this grounded approach, I could have explored meanings of 'land' with a variety of different social groupings. However, my on-going methodological interest in working with more silenced voices led me to work with children (recognised in 1989 by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights as a minority group through the Convention on the Rights of the Child). As a result, I was working with participants not because they *were* children but because they were continually excluded from research by being assigned to this socially produced category (see also cf. James *et al.*, 1998). The key question is not whether we should listen to this group but how to best represent this group's many voices

[8] I was able to adapt to participants' needs and interest in a way that teachers, following a set curriculum, are often unable to do.

(John, 2003). For me participatory approaches are a political philosophy (Cleaver, 1999). 'Participation' is embedded within the social-spatial interaction between participants, which includes the researcher and rests on how researchers invite participants into a research arena and facilitates their exploration and sharing of views on a topic. Participation is not inherent to research methods themselves as some accounts of participatory methods seem to imply.[9]

Setting the scene: participatory research

As outlined earlier in this thesis, participation as spatial practice that recognises power as a relationship (Hawthorne, 1997) involves continual interaction and negotiation between all participants including the researcher. Claimed/created spaces are never empty and can be filled with old or new power (Cornwall, 2002). They are not static but are filled with "radical possibility" (hooks, 1990). It is this third type of space (Soya, 1996) and the concept of power as a relationship (Hawthorne, 2002) that I wish to focus on here. I return to this issue in the discussion section where I outline why labelling an individual prior to a workshop potentially closes down this space. For now, I return to two underlying metanarratives in the literature on designing methodologies with children.

Literature on 'doing' research with children

Methodological discussions about whether special approaches are required when working with children can be divided into different camps on the basis of their conceptualisations of structure and agency:

1) Children are the same as adults and do not require special methods. Children are held to be competent social actors who are human beings not human becomings awaiting their time to become fully formed adults (Qvortrup, 1996). These arguments rely on agency and do not consider any form of structure.
2) Children are different from adults and require special methods but *either because*:
    a) Children are inherently different from adults (cf. O'Kane, 2000): e.g. because they learn differently from adults and therefore require special methods.
    Or because:
    b) While they are competent social actors (see 1 above), they require special methods because they are marginalised within society and therefore their

[9] Punch (2002) writes as a child researcher and labels only two of six 'task-based' methods discussed as participatory (the spider diagram and activity tables), implying the others – photography, diaries, worksheets etc – could not be deployed in a participatory way.

position requires them to be treated differently to adjust this power imbalance (cf. Alderson, 1996; Punch, 1999).

While each of these understandings differs in its view of children's individual agency and the impact of social structures upon their ability to make informed decisions, each shares the unquestioned pre-imposition of the social categories of 'child' and 'adult' upon potential research respondents/participants. This categorical imposition goes against the grain of many current theories of identity formation, which recognise both the structural influence of society's social categories and an individual's agency in negotiating and resisting their social identity(ies). Increasingly, the Durkheimien view that identity formation is closely tied to the functioning social order has been destablised by academics such as Calhoun (1997), de Certeau (1984) and Giddens (1997). Identity formation has evolved from the static and fixed concept of identity politics towards identity as fluid and multiple in nature, shifting across place and space (cf. Benhabib, 2002; Butler, 1990) within everyday lives. Within human geography, identities are increasingly seen as performed (Nash, 2000; Thrift, 2006), while by comparison, in children's geography the use of the category 'child/children' is linked to a fixed and often-unquestioned notion of the adult[10] (although there are a few important exceptions on which I build later).

The myth of the competent adult: beings in the process of becoming

My research has benefited significantly from discussions around the socially constructed nature of childhood and children, as outlined in Section one of Chapter Two. However, when many researchers attempt to describe children's competencies and their limits, they continue to be influenced by an age-based logic and convenient categorisation that still pervades other areas of social sciences (Hockey and James, 2002; Skelton, 2000) and the State (whose age-based legal definitions of the competent adult structures children as their incompetent other). Authors such as Punch (2002) present a spectrum of competencies with older children, youths and adults having progressively more experience of life and more ability to apply their learning (Taylor, Marieneau and Fiddler, 2000). In my view, this approach leads researchers to fall back on measures (the physical body, ability to concentrate, level of spoken language, etc.) that inadvertently tie their explanations to Jean Piaget's 1955 notion of the developing child with its four linear stages, defined by biological age (Davies *et al.*, 2000). Children's capabilities here become set within a

[10] In 1) above the child is argued to be a 'complete human being' – 'like an adult' while in 2a) children are seen as 'less than' self-directing, autonomous and motivated adult learners. In 2b), while the child is marginalised in society the adult is imagined to have free-will and autonomy.

universal standard of development targets that culminate in the full-grown competent adult. However, while Piaget's 'developing child' has been severely criticised and now holds less power within educational and development theory and children's geography, the concept of the homogenised powerful competent adult, who inhabits a different world from children, and actively excludes them, remains the dominant within discourse on doing research with children.

It is often difficult to define exactly what researchers of children envisage when talking about an *adult* given that this social category is rarely used unless we talk about children (Steinberg *et al.*, 2004). One significant exception is the British social theorist Nick Lee. In 2001, Lee devoted a book to tracing the history of construction of the competent full grown adult. During the eras of industrial modernity and Fordism, the average human was expected to follow a set trajectory of life experiences moving from childhood through to adulthood, collecting social status symbols and carving out a career in one organisation till their retirement. Today, the social world is increasingly fragmented through globalisation, stable patterns of employment have disappeared and the surrounding social order of family and gender roles has shifted. Lee's work adds to the argument that humans are *human becomings* not only *human beings*, (see also Alan Prout, 2004). Building on his earlier paper from 1998, Lee calls for an immature sociology where our social world is understood to be incomplete, based on an ethics of motion rather than (static) positions. Through highlighting the ambiguities of childhood, Lee promotes a concept of agency that is not the sole ownership of the individual but is based on networks of dependencies. Here, dependency is not the opposite of autonomy but is part of the same process for children or adults (Kjorholt, 2005) therefore, networks of interdependencies appears to be a more appropriate term.

Lee's work also challenges established categories in educational research that divided andragogy (adult education) from pedagogy (child education) on the basis that children learn differently (e.g. see O'Kane, 2000). More recently the suggestion that adult learners are self-directed, autonomous, problem-centred and voluntary has been exposed as a myth (Cervero *et al.*, 1999). Andragogy constructs adults as we expect them to be not as they really are (Sipe, 2001). The defence that andragogy is learner-centred, while pedagogy is teacher-directed still assumes an inherent difference between adults and children; undervaluing the agency of the child while also underestimating the structural limits on adults. Instead what we need is a concept of human beings as always incomplete. This idea can be traced to Plato's *Republica*, though the modern view of lifelong learning finds its

roots in the writings of Basil Yealix (1929) and Eduard Lindeman (1926), a colleague of John Dewey. More recently, Paolo Freire, the father of critical pedagogy[11] (and participatory approaches) wrote:

> Problem-posing education affirms men and women as *beings* in the process of *becoming* — as unfinished, uncompleted beings in and with a likewise unfinished reality. Indeed, in contrast to other animals who are unfinished, but not historical, people know themselves to be unfinished; they are aware of their incompletion .... The unfinished character of human beings and the transformational character of reality necessitate that education be an ongoing activity (1970: 12).

Over the past decade, as lifelong learning has displaced the concept of the fully formed adult, in particular within educational research; educationalists and social researchers have discussed the *lifecourse*, to reflect the view that age and ageing is socially constructed. Recently the sociologist Jenny Hockey and the childhood sociologist Allison James (2003) added to this area of discussion with their book *Social Identities across the Lifecourses*. Here, Hockey and James bring together theories on structure, agency, identities and lifecourse, and in line with Lee, redefine humans as *human becomings* rather than *human beings*. Hockey and James, and Lee's work is part of a wider movement that aims to destablise the concept that humans, regardless of age, move through clear linear stages of development attached to fixed social identities.

If we accept that adults also struggle with language and attention spans, and suffer social inequalities and power imbalances, and that adults are also human becomings, then the clear, bounded and constructed worlds that separate the child from the adult begin to merge and further refute the argument that we need special methods to work with children (see point 2a above). However, this argument does not in itself displace the view that although children are competent social actors (see 2b above) we may still require special methods in our research because:

> ...many of the reasons underlying potential differences stem from children's marginalized positions in adult society or from our own adult perceptions of children rather than being a reflection of children's competencies (Punch, 2002: 338)

There are two potential responses to this assertion. The first is to expand the argument that both children and adults suffer power imbalances within their everyday lives, although

[11] Critical pedagogy is not defined by age but applies to all human becomings.

this continues to categorise diverse individuals as either adults or children. The second response and the one I wish to follow is of a methodological nature, and questions the assumption that the social structural identity of a child is the same as the individual's identity within the research space.

The interplay between social identity and individual identities

Despite assertions that children are diverse individuals, the figure of the oppressed child who is denied the same rights and choices as the adult still dominates discussions (cf. Punch, 2002). Most commonly, children are presented as having less confidence during the research process as a result of structural oppression (Alderson, 1999). However, such generalisations assume that an individual's social identity is singular and the same as their individual identity. In contrast, for example, Hockey and James (2003) highlight the difference between age as identity as defined by social structures (social identity) and by individual identity (identities).

Punch (2002) transposes childhood as structure (Qvortrup, 1994) into child as social identity and ignores the role of the individual's social agency in negotiating their identities. Davies *et al.* (2000: 204) level the same criticism against research with disabled children:

> ... we did not want to follow the practice of a number of writers who appeared to predefine children on the basis of social structural categories such as age, race, social class etc. ... We did not want to begin to pre-set sociological categories in our minds, rather we hoped to differentiate between children in terms of their everyday experiences.

I agree with this sentiment but suggest, on the basis that childhood is a constructed space and place that the child inhabits temporarily (Qvortrup, 1994; Jenks, 2001), that 'child' be added to the list of social categories to be avoided. As it is widely recognised, children's lives do not occur in a vacuum and a Giddensian inspired focus on children's agency should not be at the expense of ignoring wider structural forces (cf. Holloway and Valentine, 2000). However, current social theories around identity formation have moved forward from discussion around structural determinism (social identity) vs reflexivity (individual identities) and hybrid theories are being developed (cf. Adams, 2006; Mitchell and Green, 2002; Hollands, 2004), that recognise the influence of both identities.

Children's identity(ies) have been discussed in-depth by various researchers (cf. Jenks and Alison, 1998; Valentine and Holloway, 2000), though only a few within children's geographies have explored hybrid theories of identity formation (cf. Aitken, 2001). I

support the use of Bordieu's habitus by Davies *et al.* (2000), to explain the interplay between a child's individual and social identities but also agree with James *et al.* (1998) that Bordieu's habitus is a form of socialisation. In addition, within the sociology of identity, Bordieu's habitus and field is the subject of ongoing debate (cf. Latour, 1998) and attempting to argue that Bordieu's theories are not inherently structurally deterministic is fraught with difficulties (cf. Alexander, 1994; Widick, 2003). Thus I find the work of sociologist Matthew Adams (2006) more useful. Adams builds on the hybrid theories of McNay, Adkin and Sweetman to produce a hybrid identity theory based on Giddens' structuration theory (reflexivity) and Bordieu's habitus (social identity). As Adams is a sociologist researching on class issues, a hybrid theory recognising unequal power relation is a core concern for him. The key aspect of his theory is the concept of *post-reflexive choice*: the concept that an individual's reflexivity is not sufficient to make changes if they do not have the resources available (Craib, 1992). Within the participatory workshop, I would argue that these resources include the participants' capacity to negotiate their own identities in and through the workshop space.

Discussion

If we accept that the competent adult is a myth, that all individuals are human becomings, regardless of age and that identities are multiple, fluid in nature and continually negotiated within and through space (including research space), then what are the consequences of developing methodologies (particularly participatory ones) based on one fixed category like 'children'?

Lack of fit: top-down social identities and bottom-up participatory methods

Children's research is interested in challenging the silencing of certain voices in social research. However, while authors such as Alderson and Morrow (2004) highlight the constructed nature of childhood, they also naturalise certain constructions by continually utilising the given categories of child or childhood, which inevitably effects an *othering* of these social categories. If we accept that people 'do' identity and negotiate multiple potential identities, then imposing structural categories like 'children' is particularly problematic for participatory approaches because it runs against the fundamentally bottom-up approach. This I eventually realised, was the basis of my disquiet about existing attempts to fuse participatory approaches and children's geographies. Thus I believe there is an inherent lack of fit between the bottom-up political philosophy of participatory methodologies and the top-down approach of pre-labelling participants prior to their entry into the research space.

If our research design predefines an individual's identity we risk fixing that identity by (at least unconsciously) already outlining in our on minds what we expect from this social category. By using such categories uncritically child researchers are at risk of reproducing the very social relations they hoped to avoid. I agree with Valentine and Holloway (2000) that there are problems in using the child – adult categories at the expense of ignoring other identities such as class, gender and race, and therefore I resist designing participatory methods around either identity. In addition, identities such as class, gender and race are wide social identities defined by the history of social sciences and under its own gaze. In the research space more nuanced and embodied identities of self come into play (Aitken, 2001) and "identity may be conceived as an ongoing process of hybridity, in which one's sense of self is continuously made and re-made" (Massey, 2005: 10).

The American feminist bell hooks rejects the idea that spaces of marginalisation are inherently oppressive and outlines these forms of space as "the radical space of possibility and ... spaces I choose" (2000:). Drawing on Adams' concept of post- reflexive choice, as outlined earlier, a participatory researcher who views participation as spatial practice aims to provide participants with, among other resources, the space to negotiate the workshop space and their own identities (Butler, 1990). While children themselves are also responsible for constructions of child and childhood (James and Prout, 1990) it is an individual's prerogative and part of their agency to construct and negotiate their identity/label themselves. However, 'child friendly' methods still continue to smuggle in normative conceptualisations, when fixed identities are imposed upon participants through a researcher's methodology. A more conscious slight of hand caused Demi Moore's screen character GI Jane to respond to the promise of 'gender friendly' military training with: "Heck sir, you might as well issue me with a pink petticoat!" It is unhelpful to uncritically replicate the hierarchical structures within our research spaces; to do so can evoke the power of the powerless and maintain the oppression of the marginalised (Haines and Jost, 2000).

Semantics, semantics ...(the sting in the tail)

If our analysis is interwoven (often unconsciously) with constructions of what participants, such as children, should or should not be, then employing participatory methods will not automatically mean we will hear or listen to participants' voices. My own experience during early workshops was that I found myself surprised at the sophisticated nature of very young participants' responses. Later I realised that even though I had not attempted to

utilise special methods for my work with younger people, my own, often unconscious, prejudices mirrored and built on society's constructions of children. I am not alone in this: I have heard presentations in which seasoned participatory researchers have attempted to distance children (whose families supported the British National Party) from the white supremacist opinions that they themselves espoused by saying 'you know when you listen to children but you can hear their parent's voices?' By contrast, no such comments were made about children who expressed more politically correct views; here apparently their voices were their own. Thus researchers who use participatory approaches to access the voices of children, while harbouring notions of childhood based on older perspectives of socialisation and traditional forms of becoming, undermine their own attempts to be participatory.

Researchers in childhood studies have fought long and hard to defend the rights of this social category of individuals to be heard and listened to. However, arguments that present children as competent social actors must also be extended to include a deeper analysis of identity formation. Certainly, to propose special methods for children and uncritically utilise methodologies that frame people primarily *as* children, ultimately continues to homogenise them and separate them from a mythical notion of adulthood (Cornwall, 1998, highlights similar problems within gender-sensitive participatory methodologies). Of most concern to this researcher is that research design that presents the identity of child/children as fixed, means that they are 'othered' by and within our methodology, and we help to further deny their access to the wider social webs of meaning and interaction that create vibrant societies and communities.

One closing thought

Guidelines for doing research with children are perhaps needed, but neither as a checklist of what to expect from this social group nor as suitable methods to employ. What is needed is a checklist for researchers to explore how their prejudices are formulated and maintained by the societies in which we live and how they are embedded in our cultural memory. However, these constructions are not what make children different, as Punch (2002) proposes, but what prevents this diverse group of individuals from being invited into the wider academic world, where researchers seek out voices of different social actors within their research. If researchers of children are to overcome these obstacles we must continually question and highlight those constructions that erect barriers and prevent our society from taking these social actors seriously.

Inevitably, a researcher's view of the homogeneous character of the social group depends on their theoretical stance on both the site and form of power, and the dynamics of that power. My aim here is not to replace one metanarrative (child) with another (minority voices), but to clear the space for more local research narratives, to allow space for disagreement and discussion as we increasingly say farewell to research methods that imagine the world as ordered, and to open our eyes to a world of chaos and glorious difference, among all human becomings.

CHAPTER FOUR
DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

In this chapter I present in three sections a detailed account of how the data was collected and analysed. In Section One, I first outline the data collection and analysis guidelines, since fieldwork and analysis is increasingly being recognised as occurring simultaneously at a local level (Glaser, 1998; Pink, 2001). I build on the work of Sarah Pink, a visual ethnographer whose reflexive analytical guidelines support the three levels of data collection and analysis that occur in this thesis:

1. Participants in the workshop gather and analyse their own materials, predominantly photographs.
2. The researcher interprets these research materials with participants, in the workshops and as well as the further fieldwork at a local level analysis (Pink, 2001). Here meaning is neither embedded within the image nor can it be extracted from the participants but is interpreted between both parties.
3. The researcher further interprets both levels of research into the wider academic context to produce new theories, questions or to build on existing research. (Wood, 2004; Pink, 2001)

In Section Two I outline the rationale behind choosing an artist-in-residence project and the methods within each workshop. I then outline the workshop process to present the reflexive nature of the research and the first stage of analysis that (most) participants have moved from inhabiting an invited space to a claimed space (Cornwall, 2000). In Section Three, I provide examples of local level analysis and interpretations with participants, around their own research material and from the wider field. Due to the iterative nature of data collection and analysis (Wolcott, 1999; Rehn, 1999; Pink, 2001) there is no attempt to present clear linear pathways of analysis. I then outline how each type of research material was stored to allow for cross-referencing of research material. Finally, I provide an example of how a participant's photograph developed multiple meanings and was incorporated into wider analysis as the image and its meanings moved physical locations and social contexts, to inform more substantive findings as discussed in Chapter Six.

Section 1: Overall data collection and analysis guidelines

In Chapter Four, participatory approaches and research was defined not as a set of fixed procedures but as a set of principles and guidelines (Baker Collins, 2005). The guidelines developed for this thesis have been based around the concept of participation as spatial practice with a focus on the unfolding of methods within the research space that is constructed by the researcher as facilitator and the participants as they collect and analyse their own data (Cornwall, 2000).

The difference between fieldwork and analysis has traditionally been made either spatially, as the researcher goes home and writes up the fieldwork, or temporally as the fieldwork ends and the data analysis and writing up begin. However, as is being increasingly recognised within social science research, analysis continues throughout the entire ethnographic research process and:

> Research and analysis may be conducted in the same or different locations or time-periods and researchers may develop insights into the relationship between research experiences, theoretical concepts or comparative examples at any point in the process of 'doing ethnography' (Pink, 2001:95).

This thesis aims to develop emergent data collection and analysis guidelines, and therefore before outlining the methods or analytical process, I wish to outline these overall guidelines. Since the analysis occurred at various levels within the workshops and into the wider fieldwork, these guidelines moulded how the research process evolved. However, there is an additional challenge for participatory researchers since the researcher's role in the analysis stage is often under-theorised (Pain, 2000; Kesby, 2005) or is considered too difficult to be theorised (Johnstone, 2001).

The latter criticism tends to arise from researchers who attempt to employ systematic analysis that focus on the realist approach towards research, and the need to deconstruct participants' research material to find the truth. The former criticism arises from researchers, such as Pain (2000) and Kesby (2005) who come from an interpretist/constructionist background where meanings are created between the researcher and participants, and participants do not simply hand over their research material as objective reality. As such, some form of interpretation and analysis by the

researcher is required. A third group of participatory researchers, perceive no problem with a lack of researcher analysis and actively discourage it since they promote the objectivity of the researcher and therefore the neutrality of the empowerment process (cf. Kothari, 2001). This thesis is placed within the interpretist approach, where meanings are created between the researcher and participants and a form of further analysis is required.

However, while the need to analyse participatory research material is increasingly recognised, there is little guidance available for analysing these types of research materials, which often include multi-media (photographs, videos and music). As a result, the development of a suitable analytical framework was a challenge within this thesis. In my previous research I had adopted grounded theories data collection and analysis, but I found them unsuitable for this research, as the approach is realist in nature and the main methods continue to be transcribed interviews within fieldwork (Moss and Field, 1995). In this research my approach is interpretist and the research material is multi-media. I maintain the concept of theoretical sampling, that I discuss later in this chapter, though I incorporate Sarah Pink's visual analysis, since her work provides practical flexible guidelines that promote the use of different types of research material and there is no attempt to deconstruct meaning from within the text. Pink stresses the importance of the wider 'visual culture of the field' and states that visual methodologies (and subsequent analysis)

> ... recognizes the interwovenness of objects, texts, images, and technologies in people's everyday lives and identities. It aims not simply to 'study' people's social practices or to read cultural objects or performances as if they were texts, but to explore how all types of material, intangible, spoken, performed narratives and discourses are interwoven with and made meaningful in relation to social relationships, practices and individual experiences (Pink, 2002:6).

Below I present the rationale for why I consider her work to be more suitable to guide the analysis of participatory research material in this thesis rather than other emergent approaches such as grounded theories.[1]

[1] Her approach reflects Nigel Thrift's work on non-representational thinking who as Nash highlights: "Thrift [in his exhortation on non-representational theory] is advocating a new and demanding direction for cultural geography, away from the analyses of texts, images and discourses, and towards understanding the micro-geographies of habitual practices, departing from deconstructing representations to explore the non-representational" (2000:656).

Rejecting grounded theory and taking on visual analysis

The most dominant emergent data collection and analysis is based on grounded theory, which is a qualitative research method that was developed for the purpose of studying social phenomena from the perspective of symbolic interactionism (cf. Glaser and Strauss 1967, Charmaz, 2000). Grounded theory uses a systematically set of data collection and analysis procedures to develop and actively derive theory from the data (Strauss and Corbin 1990; 1994). One of the most defining features of grounded theory is that data generation occurs during actual research (Strauss and Corbin, 1994), and is based on comparative analysis between and among groups of people with a particular area of interest (Moss and Field, 1995). This comparative analysis is often referred to as the constant comparative method (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin, 1994). As a result, this method, along with its technique of constant comparison is believed to enable the researcher to identify patterns within research material and relationships between these patterns (Glaser, 1978; 1992). Grounded theory was developed by Barney Glaser and Strauss in the mid 1960s. However in the late 1980s the two theorists split acrimoniously and Strauss began to write with Corbin and develop more systematic forms of grounded theory.

Recent debates about the current status of grounded theory have been growing and questions have been raised about the diffusion and dilution of grounded theory methods (Yee, 2001). At the centre of this debate is Strauss and Corbin's text (1990), which has been criticised for deviating from the original method (Wilson and Hutchison, 1996:96) by proposing a new coding technique using "a coding paradigm involving conditions, context, action/interactional strategies, and consequences". This new method focuses on strict procedure with increased number of steps for researchers to follow, which mirrors the increasing focus within social research on producing a foolproof method to guide researchers (Wolcott, 2000). Glaser responded that Strauss and Corbin were no longer using grounded theory, but had created a new method which was cumbersome and embodied a 'how-to-do-it' manual. Glaser labelled this method a 'full conceptual description', and stated that data and theory were being 'forced' into existence rather

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Geraldine Pratt argues that social scientists have yet to put much of their theoretical talk into research practices (cf. 2000:639). As she states that: "Our talk may be that of post-structuralists, post-colonialists, or social constructivists, but our practice continues to be that of colonising humanists; it is the self-induced invisibility of our disciplinary procedures that allows this" (Pratt 2000:639). Pratt's (2000) argument marks a response to those calls by many feminists for greater openness and self-reflexivity in research practices (cf. Rose 1997; Pink, 2001)

than being allowed to 'emerge' through open comparative analysis which allows researchers the space to reflect (1992). Benolian and Melia (1996) disagree with Glaser and assert that Strauss and Corbin, in conjunction with other grounded theorists, continue to build on the initial tenets of grounded theory. These researchers claimed that in order for knowledge generation to evolve, methodologies must be re-examined, revised, developed and improved to create clarity, which is formed through increasingly systematic methods of data collection and analysis. However, participatory research data collection and analysis requires a different approach that allows participants the space and creativity to mould the methods and the research materials collected and analysed, as discussed below.

Methodological conversations

Vicky Singleton (2000) promotes the 'methodological conversations' approach, that occurs between theory, data and research questions and she advocates a relational approach towards methods that recognises the emergent nature of data collection and analysis. Based on a feminist actor-network theory she states that the methods by which we gather data (and analyse) are continually formed and reformed by events within the research arena, in particular within the ethnographic tradition. She is critical of 'finished methods' that appear reified and have erased the difficult process by which they were created – if indeed they ever stayed still long enough to be labelled a method (Warren, 2000:230). On a more condemning note, Alf Rehn (2002:48) states that this preoccupation with rigorous and efficient methods to gather data and conduct research has led to a 'moral economy' of methods "which organises research into the do-rights and do-wrongs, creating efficient division between orthodoxy and the great unwashed. Those who have the method-capital, the correct tools of knowledge, and those who wander, poor, in the world".

The anthropologist Wolcott (2004) is another critic of the increasing focus on methods over researcher's flexibility and reflexivity. While Sarah Pink also questions the systematic method as she states in the introduction to her book on visual ethnography that no-one can provide a 'recipe book' on how to do research, since method depends on the spatial, temporal and cultural context that the research takes place within and through" (2001:3). As such, Pink leaves creative space for the researchers' and participants' 'methodological conversations' (Singleton, 2000).

Guidelines to fit participatory research

Most importantly Pink provides practical guidelines on analysing visual images and supports the main tenets of participatory thinking and addresses, to a certain extent, a number of criticisms levelled at participatory research. First, she rejects the researcher's neutrality in the process and argues that the reflexivity of the researcher is an important part of how knowledge is produced and needs to be openly expressed within the analysis process (cf. Rose, 1999). Second, Pink, by bringing the researcher into the analysis process as part of the interpretation process, views research material, not as meanings in themselves but as modes of communication between the researcher and participant . As such meanings are created between different parties, which is in contrast to the more common form of visual analysis, for example photographic analysis as outlined below.

Meaning as interpretations or as objects?

Interviewing using photographs is most commonly referred to as a technique of photo elicitation (Collier and Collier, 1986; Wagner, 1979) in which a participant and researcher talk about the photograph and discuss its contents, what the photograph means to the participant, what it reminds them of, etc. This is the most common approach towards analysing autophotography[2] after content analysis, where the image is deconstructed. Walker and Weidal label photographs as a 'can opener' and note that "photographs can speed the rapport, involve people in the research and release anecdotes and recollection, so accelerating the sometimes lengthy process of building fieldwork relationship" (1985:213). This metaphor of a 'can opener' evokes images of the researcher wielding the power of the photograph to 'get' people to talk and the power of the photograph to trigger participants into talking.

Both Dona Schwartz (1994) and Sarah Pink (2001) highlight that this analytical approach is problematic for researchers who do not come from the realist school of thinking, since this analysis is based on one of two assumptions. The first assumption is that meaning is embedded within the image and that the participant is required to extract the meaning from the reality within. The second assumption is that the photograph is merely a prompt and acts as a tool to extract the meaning from the participant. The first

[2] Autophotography is the method of giving participants a camera and inviting them to take photograph, as described further later in this section

assumption is based on a realist approach and the second assumes that the individual alone creates the meaning and the researcher merely records this reality.

In contrast, Samantha Warren (2002:232) observes within her ethnography, where she uses photography to explore emotions in organisations, that "in communicating to me the sensory and aesthetic nature of the experience that were recounted during the interviews ... the meanings and understandings that my conversation with the respondents were joint efforts".[3] To recognise that meaning is created between the researcher and participant/respondent, Douglas Harper (1998) renamed this technique of interviewing images as a visual 'model of collaboration in research' and thereby rejects the concept that the participant has a passive mind from which meaning is extracted. Schwartz (1994:143) also highlights the shift in power between the two parties and the need to leave space for the element of surprise:

> the photographs themselves provide concrete points of reference as interviews proceed. Depictions of specific locals, events, and activities function as prompts which elicit detailed discussion of the significances of things represented. Because photographs trigger *multiple meanings* dependent on the experiences of viewers, what is considered significant may take the ethnographer by surprise, leading to unexpected revelations.

Schwartz highlights another point that is followed up in detail within Pink's form of visual analysis that photographs can 'produce' multiple meanings and within varying social contexts. Pink (2001) also criticises a dominant characteristic of visual analysis that visual images are often translated into verbal descriptions to back-up meanings of the images. The concept that images back up the meanings presented within texts is a central theme within visual research literature, and revolves around the authority of images (cf. Harper, 1998; Chaplin, 1999; Pink, 2001; Wagner, 2002). Most of these debates have evolved from the use of photography in early anthropological studies, in particular Gregory Bateman and Margaret Mead (1942), which stemmed from a realist attitude towards photographic images. Today, the common perception is that photographs are partial and fragmented and contextually bound versions of reality (Pink, 2001).

[3] Warren's words reflect my own experiences in research in PNG and other participatory research.

How and why the photograph is formed is linked with the cultural background of the photographer and his/her intentions and motives, in which he/she refers to the researcher and a call for reflexivity within the research process. Pink outlines three main components of reflexive analysis:

1. It is impossible to photograph or video an objective and true record of any process, and analysis will never be a complete authentic record.
2. Rather than being a place to control visual context, the context of image production should be analysed reflexively to examine how visual content is informed by subjectivities and intentions of the individuals involved.
3. Analysis should not focus only on the content of images, but on the meanings that different individuals give to those images in different contexts.

Finally, Pink highlights that due to the multiple dimensions of the relationship between research and analysis, researchers need to be aware of how these two forms relate within a research project. Pink (2001) reminds us that visual images have their own biographies and when they move from one context to another the meanings change. Different individuals will view and interpret these images in a different way and though the physical content remains the same, the meanings change. As such deep analysis is not simply focusing on the content of the photographs or visual images, but includes the different social contexts. Pink states that for visual research this means examining the relationship between meanings given to photographs and video during fieldwork, and academic meanings later invested in the same images. Here, she addresses the criticism that participatory research focuses only on the local level and ignores wider social influences and supports the three levels of data collection and analysis within this thesis, as outlined at the beginning of this chapter:

The remainder of this chapter mirrors these three different levels. I first outline the rationale behind the artist-in-residence project and the methods chosen, before describing the workshop process in some detail to prepare for the first stage of analysis that the workshops had shifted from an invited space to a claimed space. I then move on to provide examples of local level analysis and interpretations with participants including their meanings of land based on their own research material, predominantly photographs, within each workshop, and my further analysis within wider fieldwork on the islands. [Due to the iterative nature of data collection and analysis there is no attempt to present a clear linear pathways of analysis.] I then outline how each type of research material was stored to allow for cross-referencing of research material. Finally, I provide an example of how a participant's photograph developed multiple meanings and

was incorporated into wider analysis, as the image and its meanings moved physical locations and social contexts to inform more substantive findings of the thesis (see Chapter Six).

Section 2: Workshop design and process.

The methods developed in this thesis were around an artist-in-residence project with three workshops and an introductory meeting (See Table 1). These workshops are discussed in more detail later. None of the methods employed in this thesis are novel within participatory research, but building on these methods and employing them within workshops as a series of learning steps within an artist-in-residence project is new, in particular within research around people's meanings of land.

Workshop One had four aims:

- to build participants' confidence, if needed
- to explore the concept of artist-in-residence
- to begin exploring participants' thoughts on 'everyday land' and
- to encourage participants to use all their senses, their whole body in the research process (Rodaway, 1994; Thrift, 2000).
-

At the end of the workshop all participants were given a disposable camera and invited to take 24 photographs around the question: 'What is land?' within their everyday world.[4]

Workshop Two had four aims:

- to allow participants to further explore their meanings of land through creating a photo notebook from six chosen photographs
- to allow participants to discuss other participants' meanings of land, which provided 'food for thought' for their own work and additional insight for me, and
- to provide space and time to change or expand their original ideas from Workshop One.

[4] Cameras were collected and processed before Workshop Two.

Finally, as a group we planned the materials needed for the final art workshop. Participants were also invited to take their photo notebooks and revisit the sites of their photographs and to make more notes around their images and/or collect artefacts, if they wished.

Workshop Three had one aim:

- to create art materials for participants to produce more focused ideas within pieces of work that represented for them 'land' in their everyday lives.

Methods chosen

This project is based around the method of using disposable digital cameras to allow people to explore their everyday lives, evolves from the work of the psychologist Ziller who adopted these methods to explore the concept of self[5]. Ziller's approach is often called autophotography[6], where he gave participants a disposable camera with 12 exposures and asked them one question: 'Who are you?' The aim of his work was to allow individuals to choose representations of their own worlds, themselves. Previously, the major obstacle confronting research on the Self has been the almost exclusive reliance on "paper and pencil" measures (McGuire, 1984), a problem particularly acute for minorities who face culturally biased instruments (Spencer and Markstrom-Adams, 1990). Juhasz and Munshi (1990:691) highlighted the on-going need for new techniques for the study of the self: "Theory suggests that any attempt to obtain valid measures of children's self-esteem should actively involve the actual participants not only in the self-measurement but also in the content selection and test methodology".

Autophotography had many benefits for this research. For example, by inviting participants to take photographs of their own lives, rather than the researcher taking the photographs, the researcher avoids criticisms of elicitation techniques that use 'others' visual representations of land. However, autophotography as a lone method has three main disadvantages for this research, which I summarise then expand upon below. First, to invite people to take photographs of their everyday lives may prove difficult if

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[5] A central concern of psychological research had been exacting a better understanding of adolescent self-concepts (Oyserman and Markus, 1990). Despite its centrality, "thousands of psychological studies of the self have left its secrets still intact" (McGuire, 1984:73).

[6] This technique was pioneered by Worth and Adair in a 1966 project where seven Navajo individuals were trained to use 16mm film cameras and instructed to make films about subjects that were important to them (1972).

participants perceive no reason to carry out the research project. For example, Noland (2000) asked Indian women to take photographs of their everyday lives: six were to represent who they thought they *were* and six were to represent who they thought that they *were not*. She reports that participants found it difficult to answer such questions and to complete the task, though this may not be surprising as she did not provided participants with a time-frame or rationale for the task. Noland also commented that while photographs of everyday life are mundane in nature, they are not useful for producing interesting research reports. Noland's research aims may be interesting academically, though her approach focused on solely her own research interests and did not appear to include any issues linked to participants own interests. This approach is the antithesis to participatory research, where the focus is on participants' interests and needs (Chambers, 1997). The concept is that participants can be involved in any form of discussion if it is useful and relevant to their everyday lives (Thomson, 1996; Cornwall, 2000). As a result, an art project approach (Gablik, 1999) was adopted and an artist-in-residence concept was developed.

Noland's experience leads to a second disadvantage of autophotography as a lone method. While this method focuses on participants' own visual images, there is an assumption that learners require no other activity to develop their ideas or require no support in carrying out the research. A common assumption is that to invite people to carry out any research activity will immediately lead to participants claiming the space for themselves (Kesby, 1999). The third disadvantage of autophotography for this thesis is that Ziller's original analytical approach does not invite the individual into the analysis part and only the researcher is involved with no follow-up discussion with participants. Other researchers, such as Brown and Cowie (1999) have extended these methods by also 'interviewing' the photographs with the participants, though the focus is on extracting the meaning either from within the image or from within the participant (cf. Pink, 2001).

In this thesis, I build on Ziller's work but extend the methods in line with focusing on action in practice (Thrift, 2000), and working with the whole body (Gablik, 1999; Thrift, 2001). In addition, as a participatory researcher, in particular where participation is viewed as spatial, an overriding aim is to provide participants with both the space and time to develop their ideas (Cornwall, 2000). As such, the aim was to include

participants in the research process beyond taking photographs and explaining what these photographs meant. Secondly, based on a pedagogic approach, the assumption is that participants do not begin from the same point of departure and it is usual to prepare participants for a core activity or workshop (Matthews, 1999; Bruner, 2000), to introduce the topic and explore ideas, checking that participants understand the concept of the workshop. Throughout the workshops the initial framework of support and guidance is removed (Bruner, 1999), as participants move from an invited space to a claimed space within the workshops. During workshops participants were invited to explore the spaces within and outside the school classroom (Figures 4.1 and 4.2)

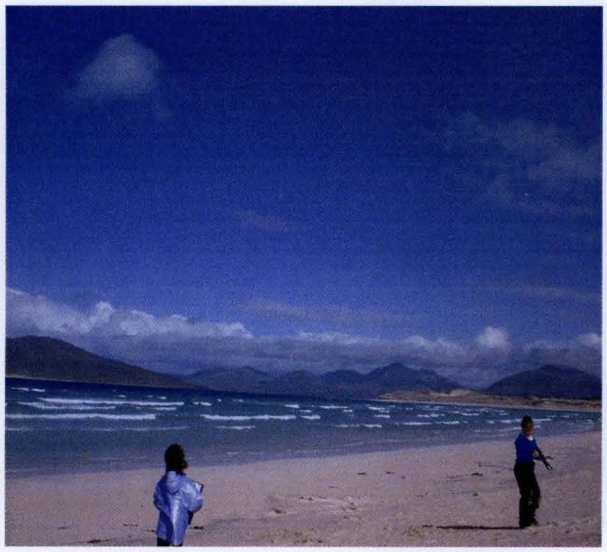

Figure 4.1: workshop 1:creating sense poetry outside

Figure 4.2: workshop 3: creating art

Workshop 1 [set parameters]	Workshop 2 [expand ideas]	Workshop 3 [focus ideas]
Aims: • Build/confirm participants' confidence • Move participants into the role: 'artist-in-residence' • Participants set parameters of project by defining 'land' and discuss different forms of media • Practice opening up all their senses	**Aims:** • To allow participants to explore/play with and expand their ideas • To allow them to explore how other people may view their 'land' to provide a contrast to, and a catalyst for, their own views • Confirm/change/expand definition of 'land' • To plan Workshop 3	**Aims:** • To allow participants to focus upon certain 'stories' they want to represent, and create a piece of work which represents 'land' from their viewpoint.
Activities 1. Icebreaker – shake away your troubles 2. Explore what an artist-in-residence does. ['*we can never be wrong*'] 3. Wake our senses up – explore word pictures and create word picture poetry 4. Define 'land' through brainstorming games. 5. Set up disposable camera work 6. Wall diagram of participants' work for classroom [my task]	**Activities** 1. Icebreaker/role-play – Each child/group is given the role of a visitor to the island [*tell no-one!*]. Prepare thoughts. Then each one is interviewed in their role [TV programme] and the other participants have to guess which character it is. [List of roles put on wall] 2. Brainstorm good and bad points of land 3. Participants explore the work of Hamish Fulton 4. Participants create a photo notebook. 5. Plan next week's workshop	**Activities** 1. Icebreaker 2. Workshop is set up by participants from the beginning; the groups, work space and materials chosen ART WORKSHOP 3. Using painting and music. 4. Discussion: what do you want to do with your work?
During week Participants are given disposable cameras for one week	**During Week** Participants use photo notebooks to revisit places and make word pictures /collect objects	
Forms of participants' data which led me to the wider social context		
➢ Brainstorm diagram of 'what is land?'	➢ Brainstorm diagram – Good/Bad – land	➢ Art work, visual and music
➢ Video of group presentation of diagram	➢ Photo notebooks – scanned	➢ Tape-recording and video of art work
➢ Fieldnotes incl. video of workshop [part]	➢ Fieldnotes incl. video workshop [part]	➢ Fieldnotes incl.video of workshop [part]

Table 1:Artist in Residence project: breakdown of three workshops and different steps.

Workshops process

I have outlined the workshop steps in detail for the following two reasons. First, participation as spatial practice is also understood as performance between the researcher and participants and the resources made available, and the focus is on the process as practice not on the end product of the photographs and artwork (Gablik, 2000). Secondly, the unfolding of the workshops is an important part of understanding the validity of participants research material, and assessing whether the workshop space has moved from an invited space to a claimed space (Cornwall, 2000), as discussed at the end of this section. (see Appendix C for an overview of three main workshops activities).

As the workshops embodied a flexible approach and, therefore, workshops evolved to suit participants' interests and needs, the original workshop design was not followed religiously. As such each group produced different workshops with the groups and I also continually adjustments the workshop format and process based on lessons learnt from each previous workshop. No two workshop was ever the same. However each workshop embodied the same generic approach (see Table 1), which I have written up in the following pages and highlighting any significant differences.

Introductory meeting

The introductory meeting had three aims:

1. To meet the teacher and begin to develop a relationship, and set down workshop parameters. On a practical level I confirmed dates and times, access to resources, and check suitability of parental letters of permission, which would allow me to record the children (Appendix D).
2. To assess and plan the most appropriate and potential use of the available space. As discussed earlier, being familiar with the space available is critical in creating a flexible workspace.
3. To meet the group of participants and to begin developing our relationships, since "fieldwork is ... not restricted to data gathering alone." (Wolcott, 2004:35).

Meeting workshop participants[7]

There are various benefits to an introductory meeting, for example, each individual could agree or decline to participate in the project, though no one did; each participant and I

[7] This meeting took about an hour, after which I stayed as a visitor for the remainder of the morning, or afternoon.

could begin to develop our relationship, and I could memorise their names for the workshops. An important part of social research generally is that participants provide their informed consent to be involved in a research project. Legally, informed consent must be obtained from parents and guardians of individuals under the age of 16 years (Alderson and Morrow, 2004).

In all of the groups except the Town group, the entire class agreed to participate in the project. In the Town group, due to their large number, a class of 32 were asked to volunteer after the head-teacher gave a short speech, explaining the project outline and stressing that the workshops would be 'hard work'. Finally, seventeen children raised their hands and volunteered to participate.[8] A selection process was inevitable, though this approach may have weaned out participants who lacked confidence in themselves or if the project was not entirely clear to them at this point in the process.

The participants and I assessed each other, allowing each participant to ask questions on who I was and why I was there[9]. During this initial meeting, I could learn each participant's name, an important step in building a relationship within a learning situation. Learning people's names is an important part of the process of inviting people into the research space and indicates that who they are matters and can help in building an initial bridge in a relationship[10]. Priscilla Alderson (1999) believes that children should call researchers by their first names. Sue Grundy (2000) disagrees, based on her one memory of calling a teacher by a first name and thinking it 'silly'. I asked to be called Fionagh for two reasons. First, I am unaccustomed to being called Ms. Thomson and in the early workshops with the Highland group[11] I discovered that when the participants called me Ms. Thomson to help them with a question, I did not always respond. Second, calling me

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[8] Interestingly, both the teacher and head teacher were surprised at the identity of some of the volunteers, and passed the list of volunteers around the staff room, where the list names evoked similar surprise.

[9] One individual in the Loch group, whom I came to know quite well, thanks to his bubbly character, quick mind and wicked sense of humour, was watching me carefully then asked with a polite smile, "So why are you interested in what we think?" I had not prepared an answer but responded honestly though simply: "Well, I'm interested in your views on land. But as I don't live here and I'm not you and I thought I would ask you."

[10] However, one instance when I forgot a participant's name shed light on the difference between the teacher's perception of a child and my own. While working with the younger groups, after the first workshop I realised I was unsure of two boys' names. I checked with the teacher who asked me to describe how they reacted to an activity. As one individual had been far more creative in their thinking than the other, she immediately named them for me, telling me that Johnny just follows the herd and never thinks for himself. At the end of the workshop, the teacher came up and said she thought I'd got their names mixed up again, whereupon I realised the boy she had called uncreative had in fact been the more creative of the two during that activity. These differences potentially stemmed from different identities evolving in the class and the workshops. In addition, I believe that this individual found it difficult to express his thinking immediately and he needed time to think through issues. He would often come back to an issue in the next workshop.

[11] The teacher asked me to be called Ms. Thomson, as she felt it made the children more comfortable.

Ms. Thomson has two possible power relations: an individual can use the title as a security blanket or using this title allows them to evoke the culture of the powerless (Hawthorne, 2000), and space remains invited rather than claimed by participants.

Workshop One – Exploring 'land'

In the first workshop the focus was on me defining the purpose of the artist-in-residence project, an opening up of participants' minds, and building their confidence in their own ideas. The aim was not to start gathering data but to allow time for reflection for participants as well as for myself.

Step 1: Being an artist-in-residence

This workshop began with a short icebreaker and we then moved on to discuss the question: 'What is an artist-in-residence?' At this stage, only a minority of the participants appeared to understand the concept of being an artist-in-residence, though the next activity reinforced this concept and the aim of the workshop.

Step 2: Building confidence and exploring art

We can never be wrong

This involved everybody standing in a circle and reciting the phrase: 'We can never be wrong'. This activity is called a Jazz chant where a form of 'rap music' is employed. In a circle we practiced the phrase until we were reciting in unison. We started to chant the phrase quietly and then loudly with time, moving our bodies up and down in tune with the volume. We then began to walk around in a circle. This activity is an important icebreaker (Urr, 1999), as it invites participants to use their physical bodies in the project. This activity was designed to link together the concept that being an artist-in-residence involves focusing on one's own thoughts. In contrast, in the Highland group, the teacher requested that I did not use this phrase as she was concerned that one participant, who is autistic, may take the phrase literally. Instead, she suggested that I use the phrase 'Our ideas are always good'. However, the phrase did not really work as the words included too many syllables, which a good Jazz chant does not, and therefore makes it both awkward to chant and difficult to remember. The 'failure' of this activity in this group did not appear to be significant as their teacher worked continually on improving each pupil's confidence. This activity proved to be a pivotal activity in building confidence for more timid individuals, as I had observed the phrase being used to gently persuade others to 'move away' when their opinions were not required (fieldnote 2 April 2003). During the fieldwork, I overheard

participants using the phrase in other classes and a year after the project had ended, Iain John from the Loch group repeated the phrase back to me in an extension exercise.

Figure 4.3 Paul Klee's *Two dromedaries and a donkey*

Figure 4.4 Henri Matisse's *The King's Sadness*

Exploring the question: what is art?

The group then moved onto brainstorm orally the question: 'What is art?' My purpose was to encourage the participants to define art in the broadest spectrum, to encourage creativity and ideas for the final workshop (Warren, 2000). The Hill group took time to move beyond the more conventional view of art as painting. The Loch group quickly started a heated discussion and one boy asked, "Is football an art?" I paused, suspecting that this was a test not a question. My answer, "Why not?" received smiles and cheers reassuring me I had given them the 'correct' answer[12]. And during this art workshop, this group of boys created a football pitch and a short piece of performance art. As discussed in the findings section, football is an important part of land for these individuals.

Before the workshop began I had pinned-up five poster-sized paintings around the walls: *Two dromedaries and a donkey* by Paul Klee (Figure 4.3); *Signs* by Kandinski; *The King's sadness* by Henri Matisse (Figure 4.4); *Earth and Land* by Mark Rothko; and *Fiesta* by Joan Miro[13]. I chose these paintings[14] as each one represented a different style of non-conventional art,

[12] My workshop was in the middle of the 2002 World Cup in football and as I began to my write up, the advert for the 2004 World Cup portrayed the football commentators as the past masters and the players as the current artists of the world.

[13] In every group's art workshop, there were influences from these paintings, in particular Miro's fiesta where he used his own handprints, and the free use of paint.

[14] I would include sculptures if I organised a similar workshop again.

freedom of expression and topics that were 'child-friendly'[15]. Re-enacting an art gallery space, the participants and I walked around and discussed the meaning behind each painting, what life experiences had influenced the artist to produce these images and which materials were used in the paintings.

Looking for inspiration

This was a card game was taken from the public art gallery in Stornoway (Appendix E), and was part of a hands-on experience for children visiting an exhibition at the gallery, which I had seen when I first came to the islands. Groups of two or four individuals had to match together, from a pile of 20 photographs, the photo of the work of art with the photograph representing the 'inspiration' from the artist's life. (Figure 4.5) For my workshops this activity had three aims. First, to introduce the concept that artists actively search for inspiration, which was the basic premise on how I presented the disposable cameras to each class. Second, to understand that artists have different inspirations and their rationale is sometimes unclear. This led to the third aim which was to again reinforce that artists-in-residence were recreating their own ideas and not others'. From a pedagogic point of view, I initially thought the cards were only fun (Punch, 2000) and that they did not achieve the exhibition's aim of linking the concept of 'idea + inspiration = art'. For me, the link between the two photographs was unclear. For example, a photo of an old-fashioned beach hut represented summer at the beach when the artist was a child. However, many of the groups did match the pair of cards together. Interestingly, the same group who demonstrated an initial lack of confidence in the other activities, also found this activity difficult. Participants' inability to actively explore the link can reflects a lack of self-confidence (Jones, 1999) and I used this activity as a gauge to assess whether an individual, pair or group required more encouragement during the workshops (cf. Bruner, 1998).

[15] I have been asked by other researchers why I didn't use any female painters, a good question, but I had been unable to find suitable prints that I could afford.

Figure 4.5 - Matching the artist's inspiration

Step 3: Open up our senses

Icebreaker - Awakening our bodies

This activity was adapted from a storytelling training workshop that I had attended. The icebreaker for this activity was designed to invite participants to become aware of their five senses before they were asked to write 'sense' poetry and to highlight that 'research' can involve all the senses and not just sight. There has been a "bias towards using language and texts as modes of understanding and dissemination" (Warren, 2006:230) and an over reliance of using sight within research projects (Wood, 2004) since "aesthetics theory has tended to collapse experience into what is perceived through the five senses, whilst privileging sight and hearing over touch and taste, leaving smell at the bottom of the heap" (Cox, 2000:12).

In the icebreaker, we all took off our shoes and walked around the room and talked silently or aloud to our feet, telling them what we had experienced in the past week. There was no requirement to talk out loud or to talk at all as we were talking with our bodies. I began by example, walking around describing feelings I had experienced during the previous week: "Remember walking over the field, it was raining. Brown, squishy mud, squelching". We then moved on to what our hands had felt, our eyes had seen, our noses had smelt and our tongues had tasted. This activity could potentially place individuals into one of the most uncomfortable situations of the workshops, though creative and critical thinking skills aimed to push individuals beyond their comfort zones (Matthews, 1996).

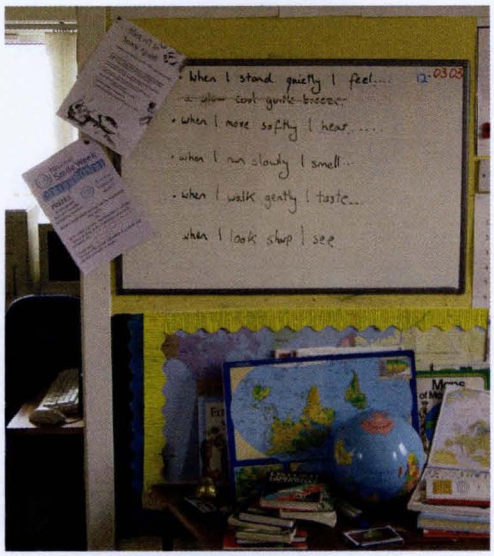

Figure 4.6 Rainbow group preparing for 'sense poetry'.
This group created the sentences themselves.

Once participants had explored their five senses, and played with different adjectives evoked by our different senses, they were invited to write 'sense poetry'. Each person was given an A4 sized piece of paper with three phrases written out on the paper: When I stand quietly I can hear; When I walk softly I can feel; When I look closely I can see. (Figure 4.6)

Everyone from the group was sent outside to complete a few lines underneath each phrase (Figures 4.7 and 4.8). They could write or draw their poems. Most participants did not sit with friends but chose a space to be alone. This activity was designed to encourage and create confidence in exploring the world around and recording it as an individual rather than as a group, though they could choose to confer and discuss their options. The focus was on the process of the activity rather than on the finished product (Thrift, 2000), though I was surprised that many of the poems were not complete, unlike in the pilot study. In addition, during the first visit, during conversations with participants and from my own observations, it became clear that the visual aspect dominated all other senses in the 'sense poetry'. As I evaluated the first set of workshops during my first visit to the islands, I also began to explore how to include other senses. While visiting an art exhibition on oral stories and bird songs, on the Isle of Harris, I accidentally met Greg Wagstaff, the researcher behind the exhibition who had gathered the stories and sounds. Greg was a sound ecologist who had carried out research using sound maps with groups of school pupils in Lewis (cf. Wagstaff, 2001).

Figure 4.7

Figure 4.8

Making sense poetry

I carried out sound maps with the Town and Rainbow groups during my second visit. First, as with the above activities, there was a need for an icebreaker. Geoff's advice was to open up our hearing by asking everyone to close their eyes and sit quietly for a minute, which could be a long time. When participants open their eyes they are asked, "What did you hear?" They, for example, may answer, "A car". To develop listening skills and focus, the researcher/teacher then asks, "Where was it? How fast was it driving? In which direction was it going?"

I repeated this activity three times, and while there was some shuffling during the first time, it eventually stopped and an atmosphere of concentration filled the room. Before we went outside (Figure 4.9) the idea of sound maps was explained: each person had to choose their north, a landmark perhaps and not necessarily geographical North. The group were then asked to imagine that they were at the centre of a circle, and the circle was the limit to all the sounds that they could hear. Each participant was asked to notate in their preferred way, writing or drawing the sounds they heard and their directions. I found that this activity encouraged participants to become more focused than with the 'sense poetry', using eyes, ears and touch, though this was clearly an activity only for hearing enabled individuals. I would also choose to incorporate smell, touch and taste [from the air around] in subsequent workshops.

Figure 4.9 - A participant from the Town group creating a sound map in the middle of a tennis court

Step 4: Defining 'land'

In this activity participants were invited to define land, the pivotal data collection activity of this workshop. While the method varied with each group, the aims remained twofold. The first aim was to allow participants to begin defining the parameters of 'What is land?' Ideas were not set in stone. Similar themes for some individuals or groups ran throughout the project, for example football and the Iraq war; while others redefined their original meaning. The second aim was to maintain and reinforce that their thoughts were the focus of the research and that majority opinion did not necessarily rule (Matthews, 1997).

Each group was asked to sit alone or with a group of their choice and write down as many words or images that they could think of as representing land (Figure 4.10). Each group was given several pieces of paper to write on. When they had finished writing out everything that they thought was land, participants were then asked to create a diagram from these words. No rules were given for how this diagram should be created. Each group were asked to choose a coloured piece of A1 sized sugar paper, sort their words or images and choose the ones that they wanted to place on the final diagram (Figure 4.11).

Figure 4.10 Town group brainstorming definitions

Figure 4.11 Rainbow group's final diagram

During the first visit, each group presented their land diagrams to the rest of the class. Presentations were videoed as outlined in Section Three of the chapter.

Step 5: Handing out cameras

At the end of the workshop I handed out cameras to each participant and I asked them to find a partner and exchange cameras. The partner then took a photograph of the camera owner, which became the cover of the photo notebook (in workshop two) and also identified the owner when the films were processed. Agguter (2001) and Cowie and Brown (1999) provided participants with written instructions on how to use a camera. Originally I had also planned to explain the basic camera skills to the participants, but after my first workshop, time was short and I could only explain the colour coding on the cameras, and that they had seven days to take photographs. In the subsequent two workshops, I attempted to follow my original plan, but a pattern of behaviour appeared among participants: individuals who had previously used a camera stopped listening to my instructions, while those who had technical questions consulted a knowledgeable classmate who debriefed them in five seconds after I had rambled on in my 'clear and concise' teaching voice. Marc Prensky (2001) reminds us of the gap between the digital natives - the generation born into age of technology and electronic communication, and the digital immigrants - the generation who have to learn to live within an increasingly technological world. Prensky maintains that the digital natives have developed new neural pathways and process information at a quicker speed, which is a debatable point. However, his point that many of the younger generation, in the West, are accustomed to technology and often more proficient than the older generations, is an important point to bear in mind.

Instead of asking me technical questions about the camera, participants who approached me at the end of the workshop asked questions such as, "Can I take a photo of …?" "Do I have to share the camera?", "Can I keep the photos?". In the second visit, and due to the good quality of the photographs, these final minutes became a cool down period (Urr, 1999) and an informal question time. This time allowed me an insight into my relationship with each participant and whether the project had become *their* project and there had been a shift from being an invited space to a claimed space.

Workshop Two – Playing with ideas and focusing down

In the first workshop the focus had been on the researcher defining the purpose of the artist-in-residence project, on opening up participants" minds, and building their confidence in their own ideas. The aim of the second workshop was to allow the participants to explore, play with and expand their concepts of land through creating a photo notebook from the photographs taken. This photo notebook was in preparation for the final workshop and was to provide a resource for the individuals to revisit the places in the photographs to gather more information in order to create a final piece of artwork. As outlined earlier, this activity is similar to the transect walk, a well known participatory methods (cf. Chambers, 1997). This method was developed as a research tool with agriculturalists and foresters in developing countries where participants take the researchers around the villages or forests to explain the territory and any associated issues.

Figure 4.12 Town group choosing photographs for the notebook

Prior to this workshop, I took the cameras to the local chemist in Stornoway, who processed the photographs as a top priority, as it was a school project. These visits also created discussions with the chemist about his/her own meanings of land. After collecting the photographs I opened each packet and marked the back of each photo with the

participant's initials, to prevent photographs becoming mixed-up during the workshop[16]. For ethical reasons, I chose not to look through the photographs as the photographs belonged to the participants (Jackson, 2001). On my first visit, between the first and second workshop, I was worried that no photographs would be taken. This was because it was during a week in February, when the sun usually sets at about 5:00 pm in the evening, it had rained on the Saturday, and other activities were inappropriate on Sunday for participants from a Free Presbyterian/Free Church background. However, their photographs did not reflect the bad weather and while I had focused on every rain shower, they had found every break in the cloud to take photographs. During the second visit and after the project with the Highlands group, I had gained more faith in the participants' ability to 'find a way' and my initial fretting subsided.

Nobody seemed concerned that I had opened the sealed packets and many of the groups chose photographs to show me throughout the entire workshop. Many diligently explained their photographs to me, double-checking that I had understood. In one incident, I was silently reprimanded for not paying full attention. Alex, from the Loch group, excitedly explained a photo of his old school which had recently shut down. I was trying to set out materials for making photo notebooks and replied with abundant superficial smiling. When his sentence trailed off and he wandered off, I realised, in that moment, that I had failed in my supportive role. However, he returned later to retell the story and I listened genuinely enraptured. He later took me to this school on an extension activity. Interestingly, a number of photographs I was shown were not chosen for their photo books.

Step 1: Icebreaker - good and bad points of land

The icebreaker was designed as a reminder of previous workshops. I asked the smaller groups, the Rainbow and Beach groups, to work together in twos or threes and invited them to brainstorm the good and bad points of land on two pieces of A1 sized paper I had put on the wall. Each self-formed group quickly transported the activity into the realm of play. Both the Rainbow and Beach groups formed similar ideas and created a race against time, running to the wall diagram, which was outside the classroom, discussing which points were good and bad, and then running back to write their ideas. In the larger Loch group I set out a role-play. Groups of four were asked to choose a celebrity who was

[16] During the workshop some participants came up to me inquiring: "Where is the picture of those lambs?" or "I know I took a picture of a waterfall and its not there?" This is one problem of using cheap disposables. Most photographs were clear though one camera produced no photographs at all.

visiting the island and interview him/her on their perceptions of the island and the land. The other groups had to guess the identity of the celebrity. This activity embodies the pedagogic concept, similar to outsider-insider researcher, that *others'* views help us reflect on *our* views. This group also improvised and developed the idea into a television programme, setting up a stage and videoing the interview[17]. I let the activity run longer than planned, which took away time from the other steps. However, I had watched them practice their lines, debate over the best camera angle and fiddle with the set until everything was deemed acceptable.

On reflection, maybe too much time was taken, though this was a large group and everyone was actively committed at that moment. I might have lost some ownership by cutting the activity short. This type of decision was typical throughout the project as I ran to keep up with activities as they shifted and changed. The anchor in each workshop was the aims, everything else was flexible and even expendable. I have learnt as a teacher for English as a Foreign Language, to reject activities that are not working, despite time and effort invested with a belief that 'they should work'. However, I seemed to have ignored this insight in Step Two, and only after the first visit did I reject it, as outlined below.

Step 2: An object cannot compete with an experience

Before handing out the packs of photographs to each individual, I introduced the work of Hamish Fulton to the group. Fulton is a walking artist, in the same genre as Richard Long. His work does not attempt to recreate the whole, but instead a partial memory of his walking experiences. He believes life is too complex and our memory too limiting to rebuild the experience completely (2000). The essence of his work and the title of one exhibition is *'An object cannot compete with an experience'* (1999). This phrase embodies the concept behind the workshops. This activity was to be the foundation for revisiting places and scenes in the photographs chosen for the notebooks.

Writing the phrase (Fulton's exhibition title) on the blackboard, I waited for a response, after giving them time to read. Most of the group saw it as a puzzle, though in the larger group, one individual immediately understood the theme. Moving on quickly, I showed Fulton's work, explaining that he had walked the same path everyday for seven weeks, writing down things he saw, heard, smelt or felt while walking. Every day was different and every experience different. Building on the earlier exercise of exploring their senses, I

[17] I added a final improvisation - the audience could ask the players ten yes/no questions to guess the identity.

asked them to carry out a similar exercise. On their return, we brainstormed their phrases onto the board. Most enjoyed the activity though as time is precious, I was unsure of what was being achieved, partly as not all carried out the follow-up work. On the islands, I recognised this problem after the workshop with the first group and revamped the activity for the second group, and persevered perhaps stubbornly with the third group. A mixture of personal interest, misplaced optimism and researcher fallibility seemed to make me deaf to my own advice. Finally my heart listened to my head and I dropped this activity from the workshop based on a maxim I often employ when designing participatory workshops: 'simplicity is best' (Thomson, 1996). But I still believe the activity has potential within a suitable workshop and timeframe.

Step 3: Creating a photo notebook [the main research activity]

The rationale behind the photo notebooks[18] was to enable participants to explore their ideas further over the subsequent week, but with their own directions (figure 4.12). The notebooks were designed to be portable and 'street chic' and had to be waterproof as I had planned for their owners to make notes on the back when revisiting the photo site over the week[19]. These notebooks became a source of pride and the hours I had spent designing notebooks achieved the desired effect. Or perhaps not quite the fully desired effect, as discussed below.

Figure 4.13 An art class became an additional site for expressing meanings of land as war

[18]This idea came from a film about an autistic child. He had a file of photographs of his life – to provide him with routine and to allow him to communicate with others, if lost.

[19] First, each child picked six photographs, from the roll of 27, that: 'are important to you', though some chose seven or eight, as they 'just couldn't decide'. One individual quickly chose five and firmly told me, "No that's enough" when I tried to encourage them to pick another. Each photo was glued onto an A5 sized coloured card. A different colour was chosen for each photo. Their portrait, the first photo taken, was glued onto a metallic card. Then all photographs were punched in the corner and attached with a tag. Each individual chose an A5 sized coloured waterproof wallet, a pencil, with rubber, finished with a name label. Picking the right colour proved to be an important process and thankfully I had bought enough of each colour so no one was disappointed.

Generally in workshops, the dissemination of materials and photographs are planned like a military operation, to avoid wasting time looking for resources and to ensure that every resource is available for participants (Chambers, 2001). This planned operation happened only in the Highland school, where the pupils were accustomed to a clockwork routine in the classroom. On the islands this dissemination of resources was taken over by participants. Participants set the pace and together we negotiated suggestions for laying out the materials (Figure 4.14), moving between commands for more glue to reassurance that holes were punched in the correct place. The Loch group, with 13 participants, moved seamlessly from the role-play and took charge. Laine, Nancy and Ellie immediately claimed the video and discussed how to shoot this workshop. In the Hill group, Louise appointed herself as a roving reporter; together we developed her role and she interviewed each individual asking him/her about photographs in their notebook. In every workshop she commanded the video and interviewed me twice. I developed her idea in each workshop, often employing individuals who had forgotten to bring their cameras to be developed. When asking for feedback on the projects, most participants talked about different activities in the workshop, especially the art workshop, but Louise told me that using the video had made her feel more confident in herself.

Figure 4.14 A Beach group participant lays out the photographs to start choosing

Step 4: Preparations for the final workshop

After the photo notebooks were finished and wallets had been test-driven – did they open and shut properly, did the pencils fit, did they have a pencil, would the photographs fit neatly – I began to wind up the workshop by preparing for the next one: the art workshop. First, I asked each group which materials they would like for the art workshops, though I

stressed I could not promise everything. I was aware that I could not supply expensive equipment but the aim was to allow them to have a say in choosing the materials. The pattern of requests was uniform as all the groups requested clay. Each group was quite clear that they did not want to write, but were enthusiastic about painting. Some perked up at the suggestion of musical instruments with general murmuring among the groups. Finally, I set them a pre-workshop task of revisiting the sites of the photographs and making notes or drawings to use in the art workshop. The general reaction surprised me. Susan, a relatively calm individual, held up one of her photographs and exclaimed dramatically, "Look at the sky and the light. The clouds would never be in the same place or the light the same. I could never take that photo again. Ever". I had mistakenly assumed their meaning of land would be linked to a physical place rather than a representation of an image, or as Nigel Thrift's states these experiences are related to that specific moment in time (2001), an issue I return to in the findings, Chapter Six.

Workshop Three – The art workshop

The aim of this workshop was to provide the space and material for the 'artists' to use an art form to express their thoughts on land (Figures 4.14; 4.16; 14.7). These thoughts had been distilled over four weeks, until the focus was upon a specific topic or theme.

Figure 4.15 Loch group made a fantasy island

Based on their photo notebooks and the work from previous workshops, everyone was invited to produce a piece of art. Over two hours or a morning, participants painted or drew. They were also encouraged to produce a piece of music using whatever instruments were available in their music 'room'. The Hill group created a game, which I continued with the other two groups. Each group produced two pieces of music after their painting

was finished. At the end of the workshop they performed the music and the rest of the class had to decide which music suited their artwork.

Figure 4.16 The hands on the land were good hands

Figure 4.17 Night sky and the road building

Discussion

One significant characteristic of this workshop was the shift of power from an invited space towards a claimed space (Cornwall, 2000). In the first workshop, my role was supportive though I directed the action. In this art workshop, no activities were set. The group set up the workshop themselves from the beginning, organising who worked together, the lay out of the space provided and the materials available. I became their assistant and tried to find 'things' they 'needed' as their artists' temperament took over! This free workshop was not planned exactly, as I had intended to set up the workshops, with their help, and then let them do as they wished. But as I noted in my fieldnotes, this was not the case.

> When I arrived at the first of my art workshops, with the Hill group, I was feeling tired and sat on a chair waiting for the groups to come. When they arrived, rather than getting up immediately I stayed where I was, gathering my energy while forming a smile, but in that instance and with little hesitation the group of individuals, who were the shyest of all of the group, just took over. (Fieldnote May 30 2002)

Each group reacted in the same way and this shift from an invited to a claimed space found expression earlier in the workshops with some participants and groups than others.

One characteristic of these workshops, where space is claimed is that participants take responsibility to explain to me why they took the photographs. As these photographs were a means of communication between the participant and myself, and as I had discovered in

previous research in Papua New Guinea (Thomson, 1996), individuals took responsibility for ensuring that I 'understood' what they were trying to portray. Participants alone or as part of a group chose how and when to discuss their photographs with me, and at times different meanings were produced for different audiences. For example, one participant while being videotaped by classmates about their photo notebook was asked about a photograph of a tree. He/she muttered, "Oh I thought it was a nice tree it's near my house. Looks nice but it is just a tree really". However, scribbles on the back of a card, written at home for me, explained that he/she would climb the tree to escape from the world and its troubles, and be alone. In another workshop, John and I were discussing his photo notebook, and when we came across a photograph of a war monument, I asked him why he had taken the photograph. He paused for a while then replied, "I don't know really." About ten minutes later, as recorded on the video that I watched later that evening, a friend asked him the same question and he answered immediately stating that "Well, it's the first thing that tourists see, isn't it? ... It's important when people visit the island". In Workshop Three I returned to this photograph with John, on his suggestion, as he explained in more detail that when tourists got off the ferry it was the highest point on the skyline that they could see and they would often asked for directions to this monument[20].

Miranda and John's conversations were not coerced, though each conversation could not be taken literally (Glaser, 1999) and needed to be analysed further to assess the intention behind their words. For Miranda, her initial explanation to her classmates was not about presenting her meanings of land but it was about hiding her meanings of land to a group of male participants. Her intention contrasted with John's response to my question about his photograph, which had led him to reflect further and his first reaction was not that he did not know but that he needed more time to think (Thomson, 2007). An important point, and one that supports the importance of shifting invited spaces to claimed spaces, is that over the course of the workshop if the concept or issue is important to the individual it will resurface again, perhaps in a different form, provided the participant believes that they have the power and the space to express their thoughts. One individual chose not to fully engage in the project until the final workshop when, to my surprise, rather than watch the football tournaments for the World Cup 2005, that he had been following religiously, he choose to work on his chosen piece of art (a painting of the Callenish stones complete with

[20] His story was told with a mix of amusement that they wanted to visit something that he had no idea of how to get to and also with pride that tourists thought he may know the directions. However, unlike the dismissive attitude towards tourists in Edinburgh, where I lived, who were frequently viewed as an annoyance during the summer months, for the island tourists' needs were important.

cotton-wool sheep and glitter strewn painted stones). He told me, "I didn't *really* believe that I could do *exactly* as I wanted before".

As a result, I did not take all the data to be the participants' final chosen meanings. Some individuals or groups raised ideas in the first workshop that were maintained throughout the workshops, such as football and the war in Iraq. However, often the first workshops produced ideas based on objects and 'things' and as they worked through their projects their ideas developed and more complex concepts appeared, particularly emotions. In the final workshop, as I wandered past Miranda from the Town group while she was elbow deep in paint, creating a vast abstract work of art, she suddenly announced to me, "You know when I started I thought land was about trees and stuff, but when you think about it, it's a lot more, isn't it?"

There were other research activities, in addition to the workshops, and my own fieldwork. These activities are included in data collection that predominantly is the local level analysis of participants' research material, which is discussed in the next section.

Section 3: Archiving, handling and analysing data

Sarah Pink's approach to visual images forms a different approach and standpoint to truth and objectivity, though she is careful to state that realist approaches towards analysis of images are not incorrect. The types of research materials that I worked with included different media, visual, written and sound. Participants research material included the photo notebooks and their works of art, while my own research material was in the form of fieldnotes (written, audio and visual) from workshops and the wider field. This research was based on teamwork, though the question of how participants' 'second hand ethnography' (Porter, 2000) was to be interpreted through my own fieldwork notes, still remained. In this section, I first provide examples of local level analysis and how participants' research material was interpreted during workshops and wider fieldwork. I then outline how research materials were stored and handled and finally provide an example of how research material was developed from a photograph and the conversations surrounding it, to more substantive theories.

Part one: Local level analysis during workshops and wider fieldwork

Here, I provide examples of local level analysis of how participants' own research material was interpreted/analysed during each workshop and then through the wider fieldwork. The conversations with participants in the workshop and individuals in the wider field were iterative in nature. The aim here is to present detailed examples and not a description of each level or stage of analysis. The data collection and analytical process was cyclical in nature, though for ease of reading, I present the following examples in a linear sequence through each of the workshops and into the wider fieldwork.

Workshop 1: defining 'land' within everyday life

As outlined earlier, workshop one was not designed for data collection *per se* but as a time to develop ideas and for reflection. However, the diagrams of land became the focus of insightful and interesting conversations between participants and also visitors to the classroom space, since the diagrams were pinned to the wall and remained in place during the remaining period of the project. On the first visit, the Hill, Loch and Beach groups presented their diagrams to the rest of the class and this was videoed so that I could watch them before the next workshop. During the presentation from the Loch group, Jackie said, "People are bad for land." Laine, her good friend, was shocked and asked, "But why?" Jackie replied "Well they drop litter ... well ... sometimes", which appeased Laine. [Laine's rebuttal to the suggestion that people could be bad for land became a recurring theme during the workshops in all of the groups, as discussed in the findings: Chapter Six.

The Hill group listened silently to each presentation and asked few questions, and the most interesting conversations were recorded informally during the workshop and afterwards among the teachers. For example, the head teacher and the class teacher for the Hill group came to view the land diagrams and expressed surprise at the content of the diagrams: "I had no idea that they knew so much about...look at this point..." What was interesting was the fact that neither had expected their pupils to produce such detailed discussions around the topic of land. Jackie, the class teacher, had planned to leave immediately after the class ended but once she had exploring each diagram she chose to stay and began to discuss her own thoughts on everyday land: the island's history of ownership, in particular the land raids, that she considered an important part of the island's history and which I describe in the next chapter. Near to the location of the Hill group's school is a monument to commemorate the land raids at the beginning of the 20th century. Johnston states that from his reading of the landscape, this monument holds a dominant meaning. In contrast, none of the participants work related to or even alluded to the land raids or the monument.

The land diagrams were photographed to enable the group to keep them. The presentations were videoed and I watched them prior to Workshop Two to allow me to follow up on any questions I had. I also wrote up detailed workshop notes based on participant observation (Hammersley, 1998). These workshop notes were also incorporated into the daily fieldnotes that I religiously wrote up everyday (Creswell, 1999).

Workshop 2 - 'Interviewing' photo notebooks with participants

Participants were invited to share their thoughts on their photographs during the second workshop, while making their notebooks. Within the workshop space or school space, narratives were developed with participants around these photographs in the form of informal interviews that occurred during the workshops, though not in the form of photo elicitation, as outlined earlier. Participants' thoughts and conversations with others were recorded over the video during the workshop and by participant observation that was later written up as fieldnotes. The most common video-recording was by a volunteer in the group who toured the classroom 'interviewing' other participants about their photo notebooks.

In the larger Loch group, interviews were scheduled with each individual on a one-to-one basis, during school hours but outside of the timetabled workshops. Participants were asked how they wanted these discussions recorded and most interviews were either audio-taped or videoed. These one-to-one interviews produced detailed insights from some individuals, though they were not suitable for all participants (Harman, 1996). For example, Alex who talked with me about his photographs at any available opportunity during Workshops One and Two was less communicative in the one-to-one interview and was recorded as saying "Well, I have nothing more to say really"[21]. In contrast, Donald, a challenging participant to work with in a group, on a one-to-one basis explained in great detail what he was trying to portray in his photographs. His photographs were taken inside his house for his notebook and included photos of his pet hamster, which he adored. [His portrait at the front of the notebook is an image of him holding his hamster]. At school he promoted an impression of being uninterested in both classes and the workshop, and is considered 'not bright', by the school, but when I talked with him he told me, without any hesitation, "Well, people are land and this is my family. They [the hamster and the guinea pig] are part of my family and they also walk on land (Figure 4.18). "Water comes from the

[21] However, during my second visit, Alex and another four participants volunteered to take part in an exercise where over the space of an afternoon they took me on a long walk to show where their photographs had been taken.

land and we use it inside." (Figure 4.19) I was taken aback by the seriousness of his tone in the interview and the clarity and sureness of his explanation. His discussion around his photographs and his family also provided an important link between family and land.

Figure 4.18

Figure 4.19

However, these one-to-one interviews isolated me and the participants from wider group dynamics and discussions (Pink, 2001) between different workshop participants around others photographs. For example, in the Hill group, John had taken a photograph of his mother's official tourist sign that indicated her Bed and Breakfast establishment was registered and approved by the Tourist Board. John is autistic and his explanations, while not generic to every autistic individual, were often literal in nature and were surrounded with detailed historical explanations that he had read in books. He explained to me that the photograph was as a sign that greeted him as he came home and that provided his mother, a lone parent, with income during the summer. Within the group his photograph formed a different meaning and a heated discussion began around the impact of tourists in their homes and many stories were not positive. Each individual began to tell me and other participants, stories of the mess that tourists left behind, including their mothers being in a bad mood. Their discussion around John's photograph led me to wider discussions around the impact of tourism upon meanings of land in the Outer Hebrides that I turn to in Chapter Six.

Before the second and third workshops, I watched the video, read my workshop notes and highlighted issues that I was unclear on and could follow-up during the third workshop.

Workshop 3 – Works of art

The artwork was approached in a similar way as the photo notebooks, where the meaning was not considered to be embedded within the image, but was developed during the process of the artwork. One participant from the Beach group painted an energetic sea scene using his hands, with a look of rapture on his face. Finally, he smoothed all the colours of blue together with his hands, leaving a flat two-dimensional sea. My immediate reaction, from my artist self, was disappointment, though he was not disappointed. The act of meaning making was in the process of creating the work of art not in the finished product (Gablik, 1999). He also expressed himself through furiously swirling blue paint around the paper with his hands re-enacting a stormy sea, until finally the sea calmed down and became flat. Sometimes participants were able to explain to me their meanings, such as a thrash metal song on anti-pollution or a depiction of a beach where families sometimes visited for a picnic on Sundays. At other times their work was wonderful to behold, for example, a wild percussion piece made from drums, slamming doors, ringing bells, cymbals, a triangle and a rain-stick, was beautifully orchestrated by two participants who usually quarrelled with each other, and they explained it represented the joy of rain! Some final works of art were full of life, for example, one included glitter, scrunched-up crepe paper and wild curving symbols, though its meaning was a mystery as when I inquired about it the participant replied, 'Umm ... don't know'.

In this workshop, the language of feelings and emotions became more prominent. From the Town group, a group of five participants went into the art room and created contemporary works of art. Later they explained these to me, using words around 'feelings', though many found it difficult to explain their thinking. In both Warren's research (2000) and this thesis, participants were invited to discuss their own and other's images and many were often eager to discuss the images. However, interpreting participants' desire to describe their thoughts and their ability to describe their thoughts can be difficult for the non-poets and writers in society (Warren, 2002), in particular when discussing feelings, as Suzanne Langer's words remind us:

> Everybody knows that language is a poor medium for expressing our emotional nature. It merely names certain vaguely and crudely conceived states, but fails miserably in any attempt to convey the every-moving patterns, the ambivalences and intricacies of inner experiences, the interplay of feelings with thoughts and impressions, memories and echoes of memories, all turned into nameless emotional stuff. (1957:100)

In contrast, scholars and academics live in a world of words (Prosser, 1998) and are engaged in the role of listening and talking to others in order to produce written texts about the world, or as in this thesis, the everyday world[22].

Outside of the workshops within school activities

While I carried out the workshops, I also tried to spend time with individuals in different ways, in particular with the Beach group as the school was close to where I stayed. I was able to spend time with most groups outside of the workshops but within the school hours (Figure 4.20). During my first visit, I would 'pop in' on my way to pick up cameras or posters and then stay on to help with maths or reading. Reciprocity is an important concept in feminist ethics (Wolf, 1997; Wolcott, 1999; Pink, 1999; Delamont, 2000) and the time I gave was to reciprocate the help and support that each teacher and school had given me, though this time with participants outside of the workshops also added another level of data collection and analysis. For example, during a maths lesson, vegetables were used in counting and the topics of potatoes and the importance of each family's potato patch arose (Macrey, 1987). During my second visit to the island, I helped Christine, the Home Economics teacher, once a week in the Rainbow school and the Beach school. Her lessons included transplanting and potted seedlings for the garden. With the Beach group, I learnt how to build a fence to keep out raiders (sheep that can jump fences) and we discussed the importance of fences and boundaries on the islands (figure 4.21).

Figure 4.20

Figure 4.21

[22] The methodology developed was sensory in nature and invited participants to explore their everyday world through all the five senses during the fieldwork.

Extension exercises during the second visit

During the second and third workshops I also visited some of the sites where the photographs were taken outdoors. For example, in the Beach group, Connor – a participant told me that he did not like grass but loved rocks, which intrigued me as he did not expand on his reasons. I decided to go and visit some of the sites of some images in the form of a transect walk, but without the participants. If I had not walked around the hills, I would not have understood Connor's dislike of grass, his love of rocks and his desperation to be taller. To walk the land with the men checking the sheep requires long legs to be able to jump from rock to rock and avoid the grassy bogs. To understand a physical place it is not enough to read books or listen to second-hand stories (Jones, 1988). A body needs to experience the place, become drenched in a sudden shower, be blown off the feet as one round's a corner, taste and smell the wind and experience the light at different times of the day.

At the end of my second visit, I set up some extension activities where participants from the groups took me to places where the six photographs chosen for their photo notebooks had been taken. Due to the large geographical distances and as the workshops ended just as the Easter break began, it was not always easy to arrange a suitable time with participants who volunteered for this activity. Finally, extension activities were set up with five groups of participants who volunteered to take me around where the photographs were taken. In this research while the form of meaning changes the essence repeats itself constantly, until the layering of meaning develops into a recognisable form (Willis, 2002). For example, in the first workshop, John spent time staring out the window at the sky and picking out details of clouds. In the second workshop, he chose a close-up of some primroses to put in his notebook and he told me that it was April and the flowers were blooming. He also spent time over three photos of a similar beach scene, dithering over which one to choose. And though the photos appeared similar to me, for him each one had different details of rocks, beach and sea. In the art workshop, he worked on capturing detail in his painting such as the tracks on the beach and the shape of the waters moving, describing his actions to me whenever I walked past. A year later, while on an extension exercise with his classmate Connor, he took my digital camera and took a close-up photo of daffodils then he told me their detail and colour, in a way very similar to his photograph of the primrose. Then while walking back to the car, he pointed out an expanse of reeds blowing in the wind and the patterns changing with each new gust. We watched together in silence. I came to realise that his experience was in that moment in time (Thrift, 2000), and in the aesthetic detail of his surroundings (Rokjoff, 2000) whether it was a cloud, primrose or

daffodil. This observation led me to re-analyse some of the other participants' research materials in terms of aesthetic theories.

In other extension activities, insights were gained from the conversations between participants as they took me around for the afternoon, though one participant who spent most of the day with me, discussing in detail her thoughts around her images, asked me not to use any of her thoughts in the research. After talking to me she decided that they were private but she was glad that she had shared them with me.

Wider fieldwork

When I was on the islands I mostly stayed in youth hostels. I first stayed in a surfing hostel in the main town in Lewis and one day I hitched a ride with a Swiss traveller and discovered the joys of living in a wee youth hostel in the main town in Harris. I stayed there throughout my first visit, and there I met and talked with visitors from all over the world. On my second visit I also stayed in the same hostel but as it was late February I met few people, which I also enjoyed as I had more time to work through workshop ideas. However, I became friends with some people on the island and in my spare time would visit them in the evenings, with biscuits in hand and a story to tell, for which I was told countless tales in return. Outside of the workshops, I also walked the islands, particularly Harris, and visited many of the sites recorded in the photo notebooks. I travelled around the island either by car or I also liked to hitch-hike, which allowed me the time to meet both visitors and locals and hear their views on the island. In particular, I met a local boat-builder and historian during one such journey who also questioned the mythical tales of the island as presented by outsiders. During my second visit I discovered the old roads that criss-crossed Harris and spent considerable time walking these old paths, in particular on one called the Coffin Road.

During my first visit, I became friends with someone who had moved to the island and was bringing an old croft to life again, and through him/her I got to know other locals on Harris whom I may not have otherwise met in the normal course of my day. After my first visit, I returned to the island for three weeks when I helped pick heather for thatching. This time was invaluable in my research as I was able to live with the data and meet people in the crofting communities, and the physical effort of picking heather helped calm my thoughts. As I sat up on the hills, in the wind and rain, frequently fighting off midges, I was able to clear away debris from my mind and begin to place words that had been said, into context.

During the fieldwork I still maintained the concept of 'theoretical sampling', from grounded theory, which is the process of data collection for generating theory whereby "the researcher jointly collect, codes and analysed his data and then decides what to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967:45). Participants carried out their own 'theoretical sampling' as they explored the concept of land. My theoretical sampling was not confined to the workshops but was enriched by my own data collection while on fieldwork and from historical readings, though these were led by and remained closely linked to participants' workshop data. As these workshops evolved, as described in detail in the preceding sections, I followed-up on/sampled questions raised by different individuals or groups ideas, in three ways. First, after each workshop I wrote up and re-read my workshop notes, watched the videos, read my diary and went through the workshop data. I drew out ideas that had only been partly raised or appeared only half-formed by participants, to follow-up in the next workshop. Second, I 'sampled' these ideas in the wider field, asking people I knew or met through informal interviews, reading local and national newspapers observing every artefact that I came across, from posters in shops and on community notice boards (Delamont, 2000). This form of sampling was directed by my constant questioning of 'What is happening here?' (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1992).[23]

I followed Glaser's approach of keeping ideas open, particularly in line with participatory methodologies, where the methods do not guarantee voicing but rely on the researcher's ability, often formed from experience, to facilitate participants' meaning-making. As I also adopted a more ethnographic approach, I wrote-up daily detailed fieldnotes and a diary. Photographs also played a role in the wider fieldwork as I also took photographs for fieldwork purposes. Photographs were also used to discuss issues in the field. For example, I took photographs of the old roads that had no relation to the modern roads and when I went to visit older crofters I would show them these photographs and they would tell me stories of the long hours it would take to travel from Stornoway to Harris. Some stories were private and in re-telling them I would give away the identity of the storyteller to anyone from the island reading this thesis, which would break the trust placed in researchers by respondents during fieldwork (Coffey, 1999). However, these stories helped me to understand the historical importance of roads within island life on many levels, which as discussed in the findings in Chapter Six, remains dominant today. Thirdly, I was

[23] Charmaz recommends asking more detailed questions, that she believes are more helpful for novice researchers to guide them in a new methodology. Glaser fervently disagrees and believes that defining detailed question topic guides is 'forcing the data' (1992, 2002).

also led to read appropriate literature to help resolve an issue and increasingly draw upon historical literature, such as land ownership on the island and the existing flora and fauna[24].

Part two: Archiving research materials

Just as research methods are usually shaped by the project they serve and are frequently developed 'in the field', categorising research materials is often a task that researchers develop for themselves in connection with their particular research materials (Pink, 2001:103).

Within visual exhibitions, where this thesis originally began, the colonial connotations of archiving are well-established and documented, and the power relations that underpin these have been critiqued in depth (cf. James, 1999). Photography unlike other forms of visual representations were seen to be capturing reality and what was actually happening. Many of the more traditional forms of archiving were based upon the realist approach towards interpretation and based around content, and they aimed to reproduce a linear concept of time, where the temporal sequence was important. For example, Collier and Collier (1986) insist that photographs are both temporally and spatially ordered as they happen. In this way the authentic sequence of events that occur represents reality. However, this sequence of events may be how the researcher remembers the events happening but may not be how participants create meaning from their own experiences, and since the researcher is interested in the participants' views, their world view should be taken into consideration when representing their materials.

When organising participants research information and my own accompanying fieldnotes (either in visual or written form), I had a clear understanding that not all archiving systems were inherently oppressive but that they were embedded within some form of power relations. As a result I needed to be aware of why and how I organised the research material for an on-going analysis. As Pink (2001) reminds us that connections constructed among photographs and other visual and verbal materials are key to the production of academic meanings. I have outlined below how I stored and prepared research data to enable connections to be made between participants' research materials and my own notes from the workshops and daily fieldnotes, including written and visual representations.

[24] I was also aware of questions raised during the wider field and historical reading, that were not apparent in any form during the workshops, that are considered to be an important part of island life: the church.

The participants' key research material were the photo notebooks. Each notebook was scanned and saved as an electronic file under each participant's names. Each individual's file was then saved under a general group file. I also had files with printed copies of the photographs that I could work with, along with other written work, such as my fieldnotes. The exact sequence of each participant's photographs in their notebook differed. When participants created their photo notebooks they chose six photographs of importance and put them into a sequence. When other participants began to discuss their chosen photographs they frequently came out of sequence as photographs were picked up and perused. What I noticed was that while some participants immediately put them back into the original order, others put them back in the order they were in finally on the table. Some participants had numbered the backs of the photographs to keep them in order while others, when I asked, 'just knew' which order that they should go in. When the photographs were in a certain sequence they were usually linked to a narrative that the participant wanted to tell. For example, one of the participant's photos were spatially ordered and I recognised it as a walk to a beach on the south of the island that I had gone on. Another was a walk that took about two hours to cover and was one that a group of five participants took me on in their extension activity. Some of the photo notebooks, as participants themselves said, had no specific sequence and each photograph was linked to its own narrative, but others had a combination of a three photographs forming a single narrative. Within each photo notebook, photographs could link to more than one narrative, as discussed in Chapter Six.

Part three: Thematic organisation and multiple categories

> The meaning of the visual images may be determined exclusively by neither the temporal sequence in they were shot nor by categories based solely on their content. The same image may simultaneously be given different meanings in different (but often interconnected) situations, each of which has ethnographic significance (Pink, 2001:107)[25].

Pink's approach towards visual imageries has an iterative and reflexive approach, where she creates connections between different research materials building towards more academic meanings. This approach is similar to grounded theories comparative analysis where...

[25] Any system of ordering and storing images should account for their ambiguity or meaning and fickle adherence to categories. This means developing ways of categorising images that acknowledge the arbitrary nature of their interconnected meanings and are not dominated by content-based typologies or temporally determined sequences.

however, Pink's approach is less restrictive in nature and does not deconstruct the words or images within research materials but brings the researcher's reflexivity into account. other visual analysis such as Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996) who adopt semiotic approaches that search fore the meaning within the image.

Pink discusses how a single photograph taken during fieldwork ... was invested with ethnographic meanings that drew together resources of knowledge about the photograph's subject (a female Spanish bullfighter) and her culture. As she states "the image alone reveals nothing, it is given ethnographic meaning when linked to other types of knowledge through my analysis" (*ibid.* p107). Below I outline how one photograph can produced multiple meanings from within workshops, through wider fieldwork and into the wider academic community. These meanings are developed with reference to other research material gathered in the field. However, in contrast to Pink's work the visual images that I have worked with for this thesis, are not produced by me, but by participants and the production of meanings begins during the workshop. In analysing an image, Pink suggests reflecting on the context of the production of the image. However, it was not possible to be physically present at the times where participants took the photographs, which could have happened at any place of their choice. For example, I could not have been present at their breakfast table when Jack laid out the newspaper, framed the image and took its photograph. The production of the meaning between the participants and me began in the workshops with participants. However, Pink as a visual ethnographer who takes her own photographs recommends working with images that respondents are most interested in, and the main images analysed in this thesis are produced by participants as a form of second-hand ethnography (Thomson, 2000). In addition, as discussed below the moment and site of production when for example, Jack may have taken the photograph was not necessarily linked to a physical place but to a moment in historical time.

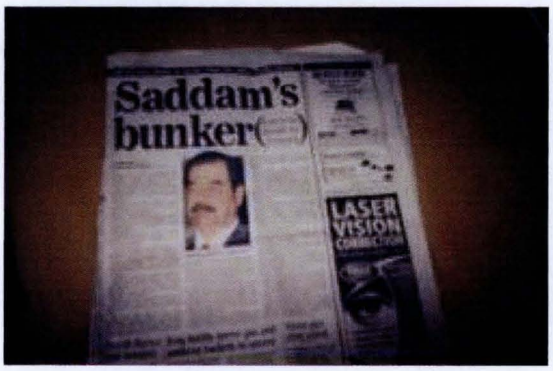

Figure 4.22

The photograph above was taken by Jack from the Town group, and it depicts an image of a photograph of Saddam Hussein[26] on the middle pages of a Scottish daily newspaper, taken on the day that Hussein was found in the bunker. [This photograph links to other images and words that Jack produced, within the same context, though for explanatory purposes I focus only on this photograph. During the workshop, Jack with his chosen photographs laid out, called me over to discuss his photographs and in particular the photograph above. He launched into an immediate discussion around the authorities finding Saddam Hussein and his discussion followed on from his previous discussions around the land diagram and his concerns about the war, his questioning of George Bush (the President of the United States of America) and Tony Blair's (the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom) politics. In the first workshop, our conversation had changed from a conversation around me 'interviewing' his diagram to him explaining to me in great detail about the political intentions of Britain and the United States, in particular about the war over oil. The power significantly shifted and I became the learner (Bruner, 1999), while he explained the intricacies of the Iraq war and the oil policies. During the second workshop other participants also wandered around and discussed each others photographs, a number of them wandered past Jack's photograph and while some began discussions around his photograph of the roads near his house, almost none asked him photograph of Saddam, which was his predominant interest[27].

This image and the surrounding conversations were reflected on at various moments throughout the fieldwork from that first evening when writing up my workshops notes to re-reading fieldnotes a year later, when developing more substantive categories to presenting his image as part of a conference two years after Jack and I discussed his photograph. During my reflections on the image and the ensuing conversations, the following initial issues arose. First, the photograph could represent the moment that he physically took the photograph at the breakfast table with his father, getting ready for school, though the moment he related to me was that a point in time when Saddam was

[26] Hussein was the former leader of Iraq, who went into hiding when US troops invaded the country. He was subsequently arrested and put on trial for crimes against humanity.

[27] Later that evening in my fieldnotes I reflect why I was surprised that he had taken a photograph of Saddam when it was main news. Inevitably when the image reached my presence it had changed context within the classroom and was given new layers of meaning. However, while I was not physically with Jack when he took the photograph I was on the island and this photograph represented a significant moment in the history of the Iraq war when Saddam was found in the bunker. Within the physical school context of discussing his photographs, other participants huddled around his photograph and he also discussed the image with them, but significantly left out the political details that he had taken time to outline with me. This photograph was part of an earlier discussion around land diagrams. The war had started while I was on the island and on the morning that Jack took the photograph Saddam Hussein had been found in his bunker. He discussed in detail the political implications of him being found.

found in the bunker, which is a historical moment (Jeeves, 1999) shared with me and millions of other people who were following the Iraq war. Second, Edwards (1997) argues that there are essentially two types of images: those that are artistically motivated and intended to express the aesthetic emotions of the photographer: and those that are representationally motivated and intended to bear some relation to the reality of its subject matter. Jack's image was clearly not aesthetic in nature as he had made no attempt to straighten the newspaper, but was more in the form of a snapshot. Instead his photograph had intended to represent a reminder of that moment of 'reality'. Third, his discussions around the war, either past or present, proved to be an unusual topic within the islands, as outlined. As mentioned, Jack's image did not produce any in-depth discussion from any other participant, except with one friend, and they had discussed their views in detail over the land diagram in Workshop One. The image did not overly surprise anyone either, in contrast to my own surprised reaction and fascination with his knowledge on the war. On reflection, my surprise was also due to the fact that though the war was a major topic on the mainland newspapers and friends in Edinburgh would mention the war during telephone conversations, the war had been rarely mentioned in day-to-day conversations on the islands.

When reflecting on other participants' photographs and discussions, I remembered that two other participants, Jason and Fiona, from different groups who did not know each other, took photographs of the Second World War monuments, one in Stornoway and the other in Tarbert. However, while the content of the photograph showed the war memorials, their discussions around these images, and with others in the group, linked to very different meanings of land. For example, for Fiona who lived near Tarbert, the war memorial is a place people meet in the evening, especially young people. I too, would often sit there in the evenings, as I stayed in a youth hostel nearby. For Jason, the war memorial was an important marker for tourists and 'the tourists gaze' (Macdonald, 2000) was important to the island economy. When searching my fieldnotes to see if the Iraq war or any other war had been mentioned, I remembered and found notes on an informal conversation in a teachers staff room almost a year earlier, where a music teacher had begun a discussion around the Iraq war with me. The teacher was new to the island and an 'incomer' (Weinder, 2002) and he engaged in an impassioned conversation with me. Nobody else joined in the conversation which was unusual in this particular staffroom and within the island culture. When the music teacher left for his class, I attempted to follow up on the discussion with another teacher that I had often engaged in historical discussions

about the island and the land raids. However, the teacher deftly changed the topic to the 'Mod' (a Gaelic music festival) and more local activities.

In my fieldnotes written-up later that day, I had reflected on why the war was not really discussed in day-to-day conversations, and had outlined my own experiences of living in a small rural farm in France during the Falklands war, and in a remote part of the French Alps during the Kuwait war, where also neither war was discussed in any day-to-day conversations. Both places had been physically isolated for centuries, the first by a lack of roads and locals inability to travel far due to a poor economy, and the latter by both poor economy and impassable Alpine passes. These notes had a page link to fieldnotes written later in the week, where I had discussed the lack of interest in the Iraq war with one of the teachers I had become friends with. She said "Oh, we don't really talk about the war here". She then went on to explain the historical link between the islanders and the army, where islanders were forced into the army after the lands were taken by landowners in the 18th Century (Fraser, 1989). More recent stories were linked to a tragic accident after the First World War and that was related to me by various elderly islanders. On the New Year's eve, the Iola – a warship was returning with 215 islanders and though each enlisted soldier knew the waters well, the officers who were in-charge were less skilled in navigating these waters and, it is assumed, warnings from islanders went unheeded, when the ship ran aground on dangerous rocks and everyone on the deck was drowned. I was told that it was a hard blow to the island, as most island families lost a son or a father. Most of the men had participated in the war as they had been promised some land by the government if they enlisted. Jack's interest appeared uncommon because his classmates despite being introduced to the war in the classrooms as part of citizenship lessons, did not follow up on this topic.

Jack's image also moved location as participants' research material moved with me into the wider field. Friends on the island would sometimes ask me about the workshops or I would offer discussions around certain ideas or concepts, or as Glaser would say 'sample' ideas (1992) that arose from the workshops. Jack's image produced different reactions from different individuals. One elderly crofter commented, "Oh they'll not be from the island." Jack's family however, are from the island. A local fisherman, an American who has lived on the island for twenty years, began a conversation on his own thoughts on the war and commenting that it was good to talk with someone about these issues. One of my friends who had recently moved to the island to begin crofting was adamant that the image would have been Jack's father's idea, and that a child his age would not be able to hold

such sophisticated conversations. This comment became dominant when I left the island and the image as part of my research moved with me into a fellowship in the UK Parliament. Jack's image lost his ownership as people questioned his meanings and the intentions, based on ideas of a child's incompetence (cf. Valentine, 1999). This fieldwork analysis continued when the image moved with me (Pink, 2001) to the Norwegian Centre of Child Research. Here this image along with other images and fieldwork material gained meanings through a formal presentation to colleagues. This audience embodied the Scandinavian approach towards children in research and therefore the individual's competency was never questioned, though their own interests were linked to generations and the passing down of knowledge. In particular, the child geographer Stuart Aitkin was interested in images of the potato patches taken by the Beach group and the stories passed down from elders. In contrast, Jack's image and interest was a contradiction to the traditional island attitude towards war, though in other images he embodied another important topic – the role of roads and cars in family life.

The above discussion outlines that my analysis of Jack's research material, was informed by my understandings of the visual and verbal culture, individual and cultural narratives, discourses and practices. As Pink reminds us the analysis of the image was not on the content of the photograph but on how the content was given meaning by different individuals, including myself, within different contexts. Jack's image of Saddam Hussein was developed into a number of potential 'meanings' that evolved, through more academic discussions and theories, into some of the more substantive theories within this thesis, as discussed in more detail in Chapter Six. For example, the image of Saddam was unusual within the island context and contested 'traditional' meanings of 'land'. This meaning also links to the concept that participants moved between traditional worlds and more contemporary worlds (Mannheim, 1969). Second, the concept of everyday land being millions of miles away links to Massey's concept of 'progressive sense of place' (1999) as outlined in Chapter Three. Finally, Jack's image also led towards the focus of Chapter Six, that while there were no set patterns throughout my interpretation of participants' research materials, except for a link to generational identity (Mannheim, 1969), patterns were forming within 'non-participants' discussions around the competence or more accurately around the inability of participants to be active agents (cf. Jenks, 1998) in recreating their own meanings of land.

CHAPTER FIVE
THE CASE STUDY: THE ISLANDS OF LEWIS AND HARRIS

Introduction

This chapter presents the case study in four sections. The first section provides the social and physical background to the case study location: the islands of Lewis and Harris, including a brief outline of the infrastructure, the fractured nature of the island's religion and the island's fauna and flora. The second section presents the five different groups that I worked with, and I outline the benefits of working with rural schools, highlighting that these schools were not the research sites, but only sites of the workshops. Participants chose the research sites, ranging from their home to a war-zone 2,000 miles away, as discussed in Chapter Six. Section Three presents the land tenure and land use patterns over the past few centuries, as well as some divisions between past and current lifestyles on the islands. Due to the participatory/emergent nature of the research, and in line with a grounded theory approach of reading literature after issues arose in the field (Glaser, 1997; Charmaz, 2000), the wider social and historical contexts presented here evolved from participants' own research materials. This chapter is based around field notes and historical literature. Throughout this chapter, and in preparation for the findings (Chapter Six), I also highlight some issues raised by participants. In preparation for Chapter Seven, these stories are presented as one possible route through the fractured histories around the Scottish Highlands and islands, fuelled by the Scottish tourist industry, and have become "colonised by an empire of signs" (Womack, 1989:1), such as heather, the Clearances and 'Europe's last wilderness' (McCrone, 1997).

Fig 5.1 my own visual construction of Harris as a place of sky, rain, water and rocks

Section 1: Introduction to the Islands of Lewis and Harris

> There can be few places in Europe where the relationship between rocks, climate, wildlife and human history is clearer than in the Outer Hebrides, or where people live more intimately with nature. Ancient rocks appear at every turn, among these rocks soils cling to the sheltered crannies, human activity clings to the islands' edges, seeking the ameliorating influence of the sea" (Angus, 1997:1-2)

The Western Isles are traditionally referred to as the Long Island – an archipelago off the north-west coast of Scotland, stretching along 130 miles and resting 35 and 55 miles from the mainland across a body of water called the Minch. The Long Island falls into three groups, Lewis with Harris, the Uists and Barra, and covers 716,000 acres, a number which provides little meaning until broken down into the different land types. This archipelago shelters the west coast of Scotland and part of the Inner Hebrides, while taking the full force of the Atlantic rollers which arrive unchallenged from the North American continent and create sandy beaches along the west coast of each island, an important natural resource for agriculture.

My fieldwork was carried out on the islands of Lewis and Harris [see Appendix A], which confusingly are one landmass separated by the Harris ';mountains'. And while few would claim 2,600 ft of rock to be a mountain, in reality it is a breathtaking vision rising from sea-level. Lewis is mostly rolling moors of blanket peat, an acidic organic matter with 92% water content, surrounded by a patchwork of lochs and rivers, especially in the southern half of the island. Lewis has a relatively flat appearance when compared to Harris, although some spectacular climbing cliffs exist on the north-west coast. Harris has a different topography with a more rugged feel. In the north, the hills rise with sheer, almost unscalable sea cliffs swooping down to the ice-carved landscape of South Harris. Here, gneiss outcrops cover rocky and barren land, which are almost devoid of vegetation except for swathes of heather and moorland plants on the upper ground. The west coast is a vision of aqua blue sea and white beaches supporting the fertile vegetation known as machair. The east coast is more sheltered from the relentless Atlantic wind and, while just as beautiful but certainly less fertile, resembles jagged teeth formed by small fjords, a favourite landing spots for the Viking invaders and settlers. Both islands are dominated by water.

The islands have one of the warmest climates in Britain, due to the Atlantic drift as they lie in the storm belt of the Atlantic; annual rainfall is 122 inches and average sunshine in May is less than 200 hours. But as the ecologists John and Ian Boyd write, "It is important to appreciate the 'feel' of the climate which cannot be adequately conveyed by statistics of temperature, wind speed and rainfall" (1996:19). The wind on the east coast is ferocious and the local expression 'it's a bit blowy today' is an understatement, as I have freewheeled down hills to admire the view and promptly come to a standstill. This weather has made Lewis and Harris into a surfer's paradise and it is not uncommon to meet ferry passengers excitedly clutching their surfboards in anticipation of the Atlantic rollers on the west coast.

The population of the island huddles round the coastline as round a central hearth. This is mainly due to the barren inland in Harris and to the infertile bog[1] in Lewis (Thompson, 1982). The main population centres upon Stornoway, the main town in Lewis, with solid stone buildings resembling many Scottish port towns. Originally following field layouts in the 18th Century, the town was later extended and represents an era of opulence and wealth, for the landowners at least. The town is formally laid out, with a castle surrounded by mixed woodlands and rhododendron bushes. This is in contrast to most of the island where rowans, elder and birch cling to the edges of rivers and lochs, finding shelter from the winds and overgrazing sheep. Stornoway provides good amenities, with hypermarkets and a vast array of produce, from computers to exclusive delicatessen. On the rest of the islands, townships based around crofts, dot the landscape. The main 'towns' in Harris, which can be walked in 10-15 minutes, are Tarbert and Leverburgh, the ferry terminals to Skye and North Uist respectively. Tarbert is 35 miles from Stornoway, a good hour's drive through spectacular scenery on many single track roads, while Leverburgh, past white sandy beaches, is 16 miles further along. Some crofting townships have a post-office and 'wee' shops but many islanders tend to travel to Stornoway for their main shopping.

In contrast to the logical layout of Stornoway, the crofting townships set up by landowners in the 1820s to improve agriculture and organise workers for the Kelp industry, give a straggling and more casual appearance. Their development resulted in the peculiar shape of the townships, where houses snake along roads in single file, with crofts laid out behind. [The longest village in Britain is in Lewis, stretching four miles from the first house to the last.] These townships representing family units were said to be the nearest approach to a

[1] However, under the peat blanket lies boulder clay, a glacial deposit on the gneiss rock, which has become exposed by centuries of peat digging. *Gerriadh*, as it is called, is the basis of a soil which when worked with shell sand, found only on the west coast, and seaweed, becomes quite fertile. Such soil exists in only small patches in the north of Lewis and the very south of Harris (Boyd and Boyd, 1986)

classless society, though this profile is changing as mainlanders move onto the island (Macdonald, 2003). During fieldwork, many tourists passing through the youth hostels where I stayed, commented on the ugliness of these townships, which are skeletal in form as:

> There are no particular features in the township which show a development from feudal bond to freehold; no village square, no village pub to act as a neutral area for local discussion, no visible memorial to the war dead and none of the outward trappings which indicate a closely-knit social community. Yet the crofting township is a tight social unit, simply because it is the folk of the township who are the dynamic elements; the physical environment is merely a stage-setting. (Thompson, 1984)

However, Thompson's final comment in the quote above that the "physical environment is a merely stage setting" is questioned in the next chapter and the impact of the physical environment on participants' meanings of land is discussed.

Infrastructure and communication

The physical nature of Harris and Lewis has had a significant impact upon the 'land', which has had direct consequences upon the communications within an island. Harris and Lewis for centuries were isolated not only through the distance from the mainland but mostly by the rough sea crossing and exposed landing areas[2]. With the income from early tourism in 1845, the infamous half of Caledonian Macbrayne started commercial routes to the islands, docking in Stornoway. However, I was continually told that the cost of travel to the mainland still remains a source of frustration for islands, especially for those travelling with motor vehicles or for those wishing to fly.

Early 'roads' consisted of well-worn tracks crossing moorlands, skirting the coast and taking the shortest route possible while avoiding treacherous peat bogs and rocky crevices. Road development did not begin until 1844 when James Matheson, the new owner of Lewis, built 200 miles in thirty years in order to facilitate 'his' fishing industry. An Act in 1891 created some minor roads and in 1901 and it was noted that "a marked improvement has taken place in school attendance by their formation" (Thompson, 1995 p80), though the more substantial roads were not finished until the 1960s. An elderly friend from Lewis remembered that the narrow bone-jarring road surface and the 35-mile journey to Harris used to take over two hours (fieldnote, 4/6/02). Today the road system is a circuit of well-

[2] However, the men from Ness, North Harris would annually row 50 miles to Sula to catch puffin and skewers - and then return by owerboat.

tarred roads, maintained for the tourist economy, although many, especially in Harris, are single track lanes which to arrive safely at a destination, require a steady hand, a nerve of steel and second sight to avoid speeding locals and stationary 'tourists' (fieldnotes, 3/3/04). The building of roads has been an expensive business due to the unrelenting land of bog and stone. The scenic 'Golden Road', built in the 1960s, which skirts the east side of Harris, is not named for its beauty but for its expense. The post on the island is daily and telecommunications abound as on the mainland, although I was told that there are problems with the phone lines in Harris, and one informant told me that he had to give his up business as it needed to rely on continual access to telephone and fax.

Religion

Church history in the Hebrides is long and complicated, and the most recent history is plagued with disagreements and divisions. In 1843, the 'Disruption', one of the most significant events in Scottish ecclesial history, took place and was a catalyst for the creation of the 'church spectrum' which exists on the island today: the Church of Scotland, the Free Presbyterian Church, the United Free Church and the Free Church. The Churches vary in Calvinistic tendency. The Church of Scotland is 'morally' quite liberal and allows music in the church. The Free Church and United Free Church are much stricter with only the Psalter for music and have tight moral reign over their parishioners (Low, 1996). The Free Presbyterian Church is seen to be the most 'austere' (Thompson, 1982). The Free Church frequently comments on the issues of the day and present conflicts over Sunday ferries and fishing results in weekly letters to the Stornoway gazette. Today, Harris and Lewis remain the only islands with no Sunday ferries, though during my fieldwork planes started to fly on a Sunday. During my fieldwork, on Sundays, I often shared my food with unprepared visitors to the Islands of Lewis and Harris, who were unaware that almost everything shuts on a Sunday, though as discussed in Chapter Six, the oppressive impact of the Church on the islanders' lives on a Sunday tends to be maintained more by the newspapers than by islanders' actual movements.

Flora and Fauna

Visitors to the island often comment on the lack of trees (fieldnotes 12/3/02). However, there are pockets of trees on the island, although many were planted in the past century by landowners (Macgillivray and Ralph, 1996). Archaeological work shows that the island supported trees, as it does the heather, whose presence contrary to the tourist board myth, normally indicates a former woodland site. The relative lack of trees has been blamed on a number of factors: starting with a marauding Norseman, Magnus Bareleg, who in 1098 set

fire to most of the woodlands [many place names on the east of Harris still reflect this Norwegian influence (MacIver, 1934)] followed by increased population and peat bogs management reduced the woodlands further. Finally, the overgrazing of sheep and heather burning for grouse hunting, which continues today, leaves no possibility for saplings to develop. But not all factors are human-made. Acidic peat bogs, strong and frequent winds, combined with salty sea spray, do not readily support tree growth in the more open areas. Perhaps as a result, trees are traditionally, not particularly liked by islanders. However, this dislike was not reflected in the participants' views except for one individual from the Beach group. It was his dislike that highlighted the others' affection towards trees. Of the others, only Nick from the Town group described trees in detail. He held up a photograph of some pine trees, telling me "Can you see the needles and the cones in between? ... and the bark?..." His interest, as he told me, was supported by his father who regularly took him on nature walks, teaching him about the trees in the area, many non-native to the area, planted during Matheson's time.

While the trees may not raise much interest, other aspects of the flora of Harris and Lewis bring many an excited botanist to the island. The moors and the hills hold their own magic, but it is the *machair* on the west coast, which produces the most spectacular colours, filled with plants such as ragwort, buttercup, daisy, kidney vetch, gentian and primrose. "Whereas the land is relatively poor place, the sea is rich, and so it is the flora and bird-life found round its shores' (Thompson, year p20). The grass is considered sweeter for the sheep and there is an abundance of seaweed, which supplies the machair with essential nutrients. The richness of the flora of the machair has produced many a song and poem, reminding me of Mongolian songs inspired by great affection for the Steppes in bloom. The Hebridean bumblebee and the wealth of birdlife also entice the entomologist and ornithologist to the island. The golden eagle, rare corncrake, red-throated diver and the spectacular cormorant are just some of the birds in residence. The birds on the shoreline are numerous and feed on the wealth of seafood, such as whelks, limpets and mussels which were once food for the poor crofters but are now left for the passing tourist or the weekend local.

The island does not support a vast array of mammals, due to lack of shelter and poor habitat. This general lack of interest is reflected in Boyd and Boyd's ecological book *Habitable land* (1997) where, under 'fauna', mammals are relegated to a table while the avifauna and the sea life command most of the section. Red deer roam the higher grounds of Lewis, though I did not see any until my second visit. The grey and common seal

inhabit the surrounding sea and compete with the fish farms for the salmon, frequently coming off worse against a high-powered rifle. [This seal 'culling' is legal at certain times of the year when the 'offending' seal can be identified and permission is granted (Callum, *pers comm.*) Some locals are offered a salmon in return for a shooting a seal. Most refuse, but seals are still shot (fieldnote 12/09/01).]

The feral cat and ferret live a quiet existence, while the feral mink, as in many parts of rural Britain, is 'loathed' and is on the 'hit list' of both conservationists and crofters. The mink is accused of ransacking nests, among other acts of wanton destruction, and the numbers of ground-nesting birds have diminished on the islands. One of the mink's accomplices is the hedgehog. But although it is a non-native species and partial to birds' eggs, it has escaped the 'list'. A recent cull was banned by the government due to its Beatrix Potter image. Mountain hares live an elusive existence and the wild rabbits continue to breed, burrow and delight tourists while being classed a 'pest' by crofters. A variety of rodents exist, the brown rat, the house and the 'very cute' field mouse, which I usually sighted while rescuing them from the mouth of a friend's feline huntress. The pipestrelle bat is found only in Rodel in the southern tip of Harris, the site of a 14th Century church. There are no foxes, badgers, moles or squirrels. The lack of mammals on the islands was emphasised for me when working with the Highland group who in contrast live in a part of the UK with a diversity of wildlife, which was reflected in their work, which also included Nessie, the Loch Ness monster, a main tourist attraction in the area.

Harris and Lewis – different 'Islands'

The two islands, although joined, have developed different identities, including Gaelic dialects. The Harris 'mountain' range is the mostly commonly cited reason, although with islanders traditionally travelling by boat around the coastline, a local boat builder and historian disagrees with these conclusions (J. Macaulay, *pers com*). Strangely, until 1975 when the old parish boundaries were abolished, the isle of Lewis was administered under the country of Invernesshire while Harris was under Ross and Cromarty. This resulted in strange anomalies such as no telegraph services between the two areas in the early 20th Century even though they regularly communicated with the mainland. In 1975, the *Comhairle nan Eilean* (Western Isles Council) was set up. Whatever the reason, one fact

remains true: "a *Leodhasach* is a *Leodhasach* and a *Herrach* is a *Herrach* and neither would have it different." [3] (Macdonald, 1990)[4].

Section 2: The workshops

On Lewis, I worked with three groups:

- the Town group, 17[5] pupils from Primary seven (P7)[6]; (English medium class)
- the Lochs group, 13 pupils from P7, (English medium class) and
- the Hill group, 7 P6 and P7 pupils (English and Gaelic medium classes).

On Harris, I worked with all pupils in two small schools:

- the Beach group, 4 participants from P4 to P7 (English medium class, though three of the pupils' mother tongue was Gaelic)
- the Rainbow group, 5 participants from P2 to P7 (Gaelic medium class.)

I worked with five groups of individuals, within their schools, on the islands; three groups on the first visit and two groups on the second. I chose the schools through the technique of snowballing[7], which is common within participatory research (McKenna, 1997). I had planned to work with Primary 6 to Primary 7. However, in composite classes I worked with the whole group. As a result, I had access to the classroom space and the teachers were able to catch up on paperwork or planning, allowing me to work undisturbed with the group. Between Visits One and Two, I also worked with a group of 15 from a composite class of P4-6 in a small rural school in the Highlands of Scotland, though my time in the field was significantly shorter, stretching to only three weeks. Due to this, and as participants' research material is significantly richer when interpreted through a wider social context, this group's work changed from an independent case study to become a useful contrast with the islands group's work, in particular the differences in participants' ability to discuss their work, an overriding focus on symbols of tourisms in the area and the participants' lack of ability to/interest in naming the local fauna and flora. The Highland

[3] *Leodhasach* is Gaelic for someone from Lewis while a Herrach is a person from Harris.
[4] During fieldwork I realised that the social contexts differed between the two islands, in terms of the religion, the profile of the population and the physical geography and infrastructure that impacted on the physical movement. If I carried out fieldwork again on these islands I would choose to work on only one island.
[5] The whole class had 32 students, unusually large for the islands. The Town and Loch schools had one P7, while the Highland group had a composite class of P5-7.
[6] Primary Seven is the final year of primary school in Scotland, aged 11 to 12 years.
[7] This technique is similar to word of mouth, and is suitable where information is being gathered and not set profiles of informants (McKenna, 1995).

group also provided further testing ground for the workshop methods prior to Visit Two to the islands.

The joy of (rural) schools

Working with the schools and teachers as a part of my case studies proved to be an unplanned but wise decision. The benefits were particularly prominent in the insight, support and generosity of the teachers, as well as from making available the space for the workshops and the wider community support. A common misconception among academics that I have spoken with formally through presentations, or informally, is that the research sites in this study are the schools. However, just as an anthropologist enters the space of a home, office or the street to interview informants, the schools are the sites of the workshops not the research sites. As these research sites are constructed by participants: their home, a local family potato plot or, as understood through Massey's progressive sense of place (1999) a war zone 2,000 miles away. As discussed in detail in Chapter Three, no space is neutral and any workshop space requires consideration when setting up and assessing the validity of data.

As I began to set up my case studies, I set myself three conditions, which evolved from my pilot study and general research experience. First, the school gatekeepers would be actively interested in the project to create a climate of initial support when introducing the idea to participants. Second, gatekeepers would have basic organisational skills, a lesson hard learnt after my pilot study. Third, I wanted to work with a group that already existed and had a built-in reason to meet together, in particular on the islands where inhabitants lived in disparate geographical locations. My self-imposed conditions led me towards schools or youth clubs. I finally, and with some reluctance, chose to approach schools. When I began my research I believed that, along with Rivlin and Woolfe (1985) and Pollard and Filer (1996) that schools were all too often places of powerlessness and oppression for pupils. However, in line with the work of Dixon (1997) and Schilling (1991), I discovered that in these small rural schools, the school space had multiple cultures and consisted of a series of overlapping time/spaces (Holloway *et al.*, 2000). As every child's home is not automatically a safe haven, neither are schools necessarily places of oppression. In addition to sites of learning, school space may be the sanctuary from a violent home, a place to eat a warm meal or, as in my fieldwork, for an only child or an individual living in remote areas, a place to meet friends (Countryside Agency, 2001). Spaces also change. Humans have the ability to renegotiate power within a space (Lefebvre, 1991), by rearranging tables, opening doors

usually kept shut, removing authority figures, and changing routine patterns of movement (Gordon *et al.*, 2000).

In each school I also had access to wider space to provide participants the physical space to move, as in the first and second workshops I required access to the outside quickly. In one school I was able to use a nearby beach and while I sat quietly on the dunes looking out over the sea, barefoot and relaxed, participants lay on their stomachs in the white sand, warmed by the morning's rays, exploring their meanings of land through drawings and words. (Figure 5.1)

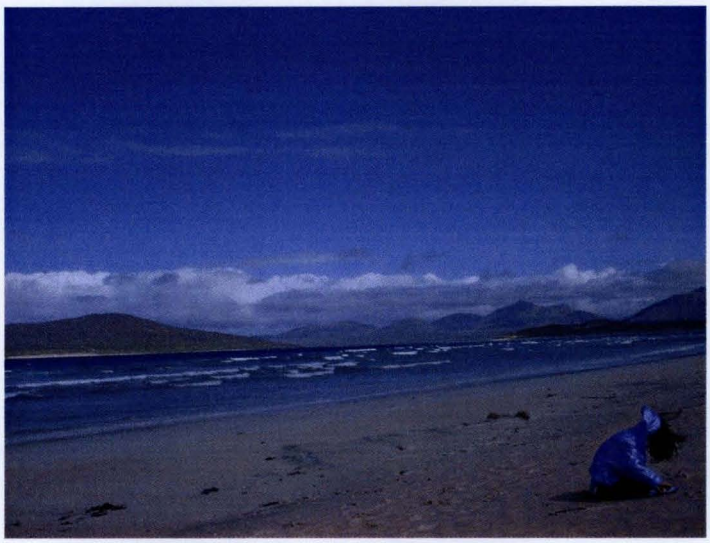

Figure 5.1

The Loch school had been newly designed and all ground level classrooms had doors leading to the outside. An important issue, which developed during the workshops, was allowing participants a place to burn-off energy and maintain momentum and focus. An unplanned space and a source of information was the staff room. During breaks I spent time in the staff room, a space and place filled with news and gossip, if there is a difference, and topical happenings, questions and ideas (cf. Delamont, 2000). But while I learnt a great deal about island life, and their stories informed my research analysis, it would be unethical to retell their stories in this thesis, since none of the teachers gave me permission to have their stories retold to a wider audience (Wolcott, 1999).

Part of the community – "we're better than the UN"

In the smaller schools, classes were composite, where different schools years learn in the same classroom, which demands different skills from the teacher and pupils than

monoclasses. Teachers were teaching pupils with age gaps spanning more than 12 months within the same class. As a result, pupils were accustomed to working with different ages and the more capable became teaching assistants. Computers were in the classrooms and not in separate computer suites. My reflections are based upon my own experiences of rural schools within the island culture and one rural school in the Highland. On the islands, the culture continues to be pro-education. Each school I worked with was an extension of the local community. All schools may be classed as part of a community but in rural parts of the country, the school is often more closely connected to the immediate community. One of the smaller schools doubled-up as a church on Sundays and as a community centre. Another small school was five miles from the nearest home and on one fateful day, one participant forgot to bring her camera. Through a phone call to her mother, the camera was given to a neighbour, who then requested the postman to deliver the camera along with his other deliveries. The postman then completed the final leg of his journey by making a visit to the school and handing over the camera. And I agreed when the teacher said, "We're better than the UN, you know?". The close link to the community can both nurture and smother, as reflected in the following poem by a 6th form pupil in Harris, which was used in a advertising booklet for a local art exhibition:

An isolated island of peace and tranquillity
Miles of outstretched rich golden sand
A powerful feeling of freedom and strength
As the waves crash against the shore.
The comforting feeling of knowing everyone
and being known in return is sometimes Suffocating.

(Joanna Morrison, 6th year[8], Sir E. Scott School)

[8] 6th year is the final year of education in Scottish secondary school.

Section 3: Land tenure and land use

During my attempts to explore the fragmented history of the islands' land tenure, a recurring pattern appeared: stories focused on the past, in particular the clearances. Many books are written by 'outsiders' though they conflict with stories the locals inhabitants told me, which in turn conflict with each other. However, "Scotland has a long literary tradition in which many people have written histories for various reasons, investing certain people and lifestyles with meaning, creating linkages between past and present groups, and between those groups and themselves. People themselves use these ideas in various ways to derive meaning" (Parman, 1989:159). Myth making in this thesis follows the views of the anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss who believed that myths are codes, which reflect our knowledge based on our, or the ancients, understanding of reality trying to link fundamental cosmology with everyday experience (2001). Myths give meaning to our world, to our experiences, and they reveal something about ourselves, our deep and enduring need to make myths. I return to the constructions of Scotland and land in Chapter Six.

Most interestingly, stories whether read in books or newspapers, or heard from inhabitants or visitors, rarely reflected the stories told to me by my participants who appeared to straddle both the traditional and modern worlds embedded in their everyday lives. Participants meanings of land need to be understood within the wider historical context of the land history and the impact on everyday lives. This following section, provides the background for the findings chapters and includes a poem from a famous Lewis writer since music and storytelling is entwined in island daily life (Campbell and Cheape, 2000).

One route through the histories of Lewis & Harris' land tenure ...

To begin to understand the land tenure system[9], in any part of the Highlands and islands of Scotland, we need to revisit that old favourite and often over-romanticised, breakdown of the clan systems. The clan chief's responsibility was to his people who he 'looked after' and who in return unquestioningly formed his 'army' whose number was a measure of his own worth. As a clan their power and identity was formed by their land boundaries, which waxed and waned depending on their success at wrestling land from other clans either by persuasion or by force. The relative merit of this set-up for the common people has been

[9] Trying to piece together reminded me of trying to understand the land rights in Papua New Guinea, which must be some of the most complex set of land rights in the world (Thomson, 1996).

debated over the centuries (Sinclair and Newton, 1996). The historian Francis Thompson writes that "when the exiled Highlander talks of 'home' he means, the natural and physical environment, the wider elements of sky, moorland, hills and the like, which provided the basic identification" (1984: p).

During the time of the clans, land was worked on the 'chaotic' run-rig system with plots changing hand every three years. 'Payment' was in kind with produce from the land. Historical sources vary on the state of agriculture at that time from a bountiful land (Boyd, 1999) to a place of waste (Thompson, 1978). However, the diet and the land use of the local people were to change, beginning in the mid 18th Century with the catalytic breakdown of the clans. In short, after the Jacobitean rebellion of 1745, and the well-documented defeat, an act was passed removing the legal powers of the remaining chiefs and banning Highland dress. Gaelic was strongly discouraged in public life and at school, and English was viewed to be the *lingua franca*, although almost no one spoke the language. Many clan chiefs 'relocated' to Edinburgh or London, in order to retain some voting rights, moving them into the monetary economy and breaking ties with their clans people. This shift began the long-standing tradition of absentee landowners, which continues up to today. Tacksmen, who had leased land for extra income, often to family, were employed by the departing chiefs to make money to keep them in their new urban lifestyle. This often involved ousting their 'tenants' in favour of black cattle. But in the 1760s, harvests failed, cattle died and the tacksmen emigrated (Macdonald, 1998, p56). Factors were then brought in with neither kinship nor local ties, and rents doubled or more. Some islanders had no choice but to sell themselves to be servants or labourers in the Americas. For those who remained, a new competitor was about to arrive, the sheep.

With the arrival of the cheviot sheep, an independent and hardy creature, tenants were moved to less hospitable places on the east coast of the islands to scratch out a living among the stones, along shorelines, on undrained land or into overcrowded townships. For the landowners, the kelp industry[10] was booming, especially in Harris, and optimism grew as landowners poured in money, and the population doubled. As the population increased in the townships, the landowners reallocated and subdivided land into long thin strips of land and houses and the system of crofting, one tenant to one strip of land, was developed and this produced the straggling shapes of the townships of today. Then with the end of the Napoleonic war, cheaper materials began to flood the market. The rich and poor were hit hard. The Macleods of Harris were ruined trying to support the people and

[10] A seaweed product used in the soap and glass industry.

sold the island in 1834. The new owner moved more sheep in and the remaining islanders over to the rocky east coast, where soil was scarce. Even today these townships bury their dead on the west coast,[11] across the coffin road due to lack of top soil.

In the 1830s, Lewis was owned by the Earls of Seaforths, who lost their fortune in the ill-fated Jacobean cause (Macdonald, 2000). Large tracts of land for sheep farming were let to the highest bidder, who was usually incomers. Four large deer farms were also set up for hunting, one on the Rainbow area. Villagers were cleared and people were 'encouraged' to emigrate. For those left, grazing rights were severely limited and the islanders' right of 'one-for-the-pot' was now called 'poaching'. This conflict exists today between landowner/gamekeepers and the locals, as highlighted in the Hill group's discussions. In 1844 the Seaforths sold Lewis to James Matheson, a Sutherland boy who made his money in the Far East, and who continued the sheep farming policy. With devastating bad-timing, the potato blight and the ensuing famine hit islanders. Matheson, who was an incomer and a businessman, continued the 'emigration' policy and subsidised villagers' passage to Canada. These forced relocations occurred throughout the Highlands and islands from the 1790 to the 1860s and were known as the Clearances.

> ... I was returning from my ramble, a strange wailing sound reached my ears at intervals on the breeze from the west. On gaining the top of a hill on the south side of the valley, I could see a long and motley procession wending along the road that led from Suisinish. It halted at the point in the road opposite Kilbride, and there the lamentation became long and loud ... there were old men and woman, too feeble to walk, who were placed on carts, the younger members of the community on foot were carrying their bundles of clothes and household effect, while the children with looks of alarm, walked alongside. [Uist clearances in the 1850s, 1998:115]

> there was great strength of feeling about the clearances as the oral histories and songs which follow make clear. There is still however controversy over the consequences of the clearances, about land use and the role of the landlords and about the economic development of the Highlands and Islands [Hebridean Odyssey, 1998:114]

The history books tell us that with a different language, little formal education and no voting rights until the end of the 19th Century, the villagers were defenceless and these deeply religious people were encouraged by their clergy to meekly accept their fate (Macdonald, 1979). But while resistance was to rise some 70 years later, the 'land hunger'

[11] The body was carried over a pass called the coffin road to the sandy soils of the west coast.

became entrenched within the island culture. For the islanders left, a new industry had developed, commercial fishing which continued until the 1930s.

Commercial fishing on the islands had been in existence since before the 16th Century when the French and Spaniards travelled to Minch for herring. In Lewis, the first Earl Seaforth tried to develop this industry with little success. Then in Harris, in the late 18th Century, the last of the Macleods tried to develop the fishing industry but faced unenthusiastic locals. The historian, Francis Thompson criticises the islanders asking "where were the islanders in all this activity to develop the fishing around them?" (1984:35).[12] However, it is likely that after the clearances, the potato famine and the loss of the kelp industry, the locals were impoverished and broken people who had neither the physical nor the emotional strength, or resources, to work or organise fishing boats (Boyd, 1997).

Historically, the fishing industry did prosper in the mid 18th Century but only when the island owners financed it.[13] However, while many historical books boast healthy statistics of tonnage shipped and profit made during the 19th Century, until its heyday in the 1930s, for the local people this industry was a very different story. Islanders had always fished for subsistence food but since crofting had been introduced, fishing had provided extra income, which was seasonal and fitted with seed-time and harvest on the croft (Macdonald, 1998, p59). Fishing was unreliable and the impoverished crofters were enticed to follow the herring to Shetland, then as far down as Great Yarmouth. Fishing became a year round occupation. The men found work on the drift boats while the young women gutted and packed the fish at the ports. The life was harsh[14] as reflected in a poem 'Do Mo Mhathair' (To my mother) by the Lewis writer, Iain Mac a' Ghobhainn (Iain Crighton Smith, 1994):

> You were gutting herring in distant Yarmouth, and the salt
> sun in the morning rising out of the sea, the blood on the
> edge of your knife, and that salt so coarse that it stopped
> you from speaking and made your lips bitter.

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[12] This perception of 'local's perceived laziness, I have also witnesses in Mongolia, from some short term aid and volunteer workers who arrive in summer/ autumn and do not experience the cold hard months of a Mongolian winter.

[13] English companies were exporting salted herring as a food source for slaves in the West Indies (Boyd and Boyd, 1989).

[14] I remember stories from my Grandmother [*b 1899*], of the hard life of the fishing 'quains'. My mother, a nurse in Aberdeen in the late 1950s, told me of fishing girls coming into casualty with bad infections along their hands and arms that needed antibiotics. But my father told me "I remember seeing them on the bus on my way to school. God they stank of fish but they didn't look unhappy to me ... they seem so full of life." (fieldnote 31st October, 2002)

I was in Aberdeen sucking new course,
My Gaelic in a book and my Latin at the tiller
Sitting there on a chair with my coffee beside me
And leaves shaking the sails of my scholarship and my intelligence.

Guilt is tormenting me because of what happened and how things are.
I would not like to be getting up in the darkness of the day
Gutting and tearing the fish of the morning on the shore
and that savage sea to be roaring down my gloves without cease.

Though I do that in my poetry, it is my own blood that is on my hands,
and every herring that the high tide gave me palpitating till I make a song,
and instead of a cooper my language always hard and strict on me,
and the coarse salt on my ring bringing animation to death.

Many crofters returned to maintain their crofts during the year. Others did not. This was the beginning of the absent crofter, which continues today, a topic mentioned within the two groups on Harris. In the 1880s, poverty loomed again with a slump in the unpredictable fishing market, fuelling the 'land hunger'. But this time the islanders were a different generation who had travelled and were better educated and crofters called for the return of the land taken in the Clearances (Fraser, 1999). When they went unheard 'agitation' began throughout the Highlands and islands and riots began in Lewis and Skye. Expatriates in the main cities had drummed-up public support and eventually in 1884, male crofters won the right to vote and elected a sympathetic Member of Parliament.

In 1886, the first crofting Act was passed which gave security of tenure[15] and made tenancy heritable. Unfortunately, this first act did not help the cottars and squatters of the islands who made up half the population of Lewis by the early 20th Century (Macdonald, 1982, p63). The riots and land raids continued into the early 20th Century. Arrests were made with subsequent acquittals, due in part to the effort involved in translating everything into and from the Gaelic, and some of the arrested found themselves awarded small crofts in Harris (Macdonald *et al.*, 1991). I return to the land question in the final chapter, as the land question in Scotland has never been answered. The site of the Hill group has a

[15] The crofter could be, and still can be, evicted if they are a year in arrears.

monument to these land raids, but this topic was not raised within their research material, though their teacher discussed this topic in detail with me.

The islands still continued to change hands. In 1918, Lewis was bought by the soap magnate Lord Leverhulme. Leverhulme was a successful business man from Liverpool who had great visions for Lewis as a fishing empire since "acre for acre the seas surrounding the Hebrides was infinitely richer than the land" (Thompson, 1984:128). His dream was to make Stornoway the centre of a fishing empire. Unfortunately, for him, his plans relied upon the islanders 'understanding' that their only economic future was to reject crofting and embrace fishing as their main activity. [Today, we can see a similar position with the wind farms on the isle of Lewis]. But the *Leodhasach*, distrustful of landowners and still pining for their 'stolen' land, refused to co-operate.[16] His offer of jobs in fish canning factories failed to entice everyone into his plans. To fuel the fire, soldiers returning after the First World War had been promised small pieces of land for their war effort. The land raids continued and Leverhulme in 1923, fed-up and with a post-war slump in the fishing market, offered to sell the island to the people. Unprepared for the offer and unsupported by the government, the crofters chose to cling to their crofting rights instead. Lewis was quickly parcelled out and the new owners continued the tradition of sheep farming and deer hunting.

By then Leverhulme had moved his plans to Harris, which he had bought in 1919. Leverhulme refocused his plans upon the village of Obbe, and in a modest move renamed it Leverburgh. Suddenly in 1925, after a visit to the Congo, Lord Leverhulme died. Harris was swiftly divided up between the highest bidders. While the crofters "had been prepared to await the outcome of the Leverhulme experiment ... when that bubble burst the old land hunger began to gnaw at them again" (Macdonald, 1982, p8). By this time, in Edinburgh, a powerful 'crofters lobby' had been built up who had gained both public and government support. Between 1900 and 1930 most of the land was returned to small crofting units[17], although the land was still owned by absentee landlords.

More crofting acts were to follow. In 1955 grants were given to renovate traditional blackhouses to modern 'white' ones. This act resulted in a boom in housing construction and the result can be seen today as a patchwork of whitewashed houses, with various

[16] A local historian told me that Leverhulme was respected but his mercantile background failed to recognise the people's deep attachment to the land (fieldnotes 31 June 2002).
[17] Findlay MacDonald's father was one of the chosen few whose near ancestors had been forcibly removed from that area. He compares his father's return like the Jews returning to land of Israel (1989)

extensions, supported by various housing grants over the years. In 1960, crofters were given the option to buy their land. However, few took up the offer, and to this day continue to decline it, as a landowner loses crofting status and rights. A more recent act in 1993 has attempted to reconcile landownership rights with crofting rights but at present remains a paper promise. During my second visit, part of Harris was bought over by the communities and I attended the official ceremony, with the Rainbow group, though none of the group mentioned the ceremony before or after the event as part of the project.

Section 4: Everyday lives on the islands

The islands have experienced some dramatic changes in land tenure and ownership, as outlined above, though the islander's daily lives continued and a pattern of land use had developed by the early 20th Century, and continued unchanged until the mid 20th Century (Boyd and Boyd, 1989). In the early spring, the croft work started, seaweed was hauled up from the sea to fertilise the small plots of land, for oats, and the lazy beds[18] for potatoes, which were planted in May. The poorer land would hold only lazy beds. Work was done on a communal basis, the sowing, lambing, shearing, waulking and peat cutting. Peat was cut in June, dried for a month then creeled back to the homesteads in July. The hay and oats were cut with a sickle in midsummer. Potatoes were dug in October. The women worked hard, as did the children, and carried out most of the crofting duties. A friend from Lewis, born in the early 1930s, told me with great flair, of meeting a local *cailloch*, leading a stirk, carrying a full creel of peat while plucking a chicken. The men had their own duties as crofting had never been a sole 'occupation'. Many men were part-time fishermen, some fishing for lobster and others for herring, which was the staple diet, while others travelled with deep-sea boats around the world, returning in early spring. Lewis and Harris remained one of the few places where crofters went to the *airigh* (moorland shieling or mountain pasture). On the same time every year, crofters, sheep and cattle would travel six to fourteen miles, across rugged terrain, to high summer pastures. Some stories tell of women carrying provisions daily to the men; others recount young town men visiting the sheilings, ceilidhing with the young maidens and returning the next morning. "I have heard the old men and woman waxing eloquent over these lightsome days and nights of their youth and sobbing and sighing over awakened memories too tender for words" (Sinclair,

[18] When the islanders were moved to less fertile soil, a new growing medium was needed. The *feaarngan* or 'lazy bed' was developed, an unusual word considering the work involved. To escape the corrosive saltwater, areas on higher ground were dug out or hollows selected, then seaweed, a good fertiliser, was hauled up from the shore and mixed with peat to create a medium for potatoes, the staple diet.

1997:87). Joan and Mhairi, older crofters, discussed the songs that they sang as they went to the Airigh but when I asked for a translation, they refused telling me they were too risqué to translate.

The home was a place for the cottage industry of the islands', Harris or Lewis, tweed. Many women and men, particularly in Harris, were weaver-crofters who spun and wove in the evenings. This industry, using natural dyes relied upon an intimate knowledge of the flora around the croft. "Every colour imaginable could be obtained from a common vegetable source, and the tweeds from particular districts could be fairly accurately identified from the proliferation of plant native to these parts. ... there was wealth of colour to be distilled from nature because of the lush growth on machair and on moor. And every girl, up to my mother's generation at least, had to know exactly which colour each plant provided when it was boiled with a fleece" (Macdonald, 1982, p35). Plants were not only used for dyeing but in medicinal use (Beith, 1995); patches of nettles were cultivated around dwellings, as were other plants for food or medicine, but today grow as a reminder where a home once stood (A. Wilson, 2002, *pers. com*). Today, there are only a handful of weavers and few, mostly due to economical reasons, who use natural dyes. The botanist Tess Darwin in her Hebridean quest found no "evidence of continuous routine use of dyes from wild plants, only vibrant memories and a few hanks of wool, a few knitted garments for sale to tourists" (Darwin, 1996:39). Life, remains woven into songs and music, especially the waulking[19] (Fleming, 1995).

Islander's daily lives – some stories from today

While the islands have changed greatly over the past century, some things remain the same. Work is often carried out on a communal basis. Peat is still cut, although not everywhere.[20] And quads and cars have replaced shanks pony. Potatoes are still planted in May and dug in October. Locals, usually the men, still meet at the *fank* and dip and hand-shear the sheep. Men still fish but more often for pleasure, though they always have, as the fishing industry has declined over the passed decades. As crofting dictates, many continue to have part-time jobs. Employment is from public services, teachers, government posts, the police and the post (Scottish Executive, 2000). In the past ten years, fish farms have been set up around the islands and "if it wasn't for the fish farm there would be a lot less people

[19] Waulking (in Gaelic luadh) is the technique of finishing the newly-woven tweed by soaking it and thumping it rhythmically to shrink and soften it. The songs served to keep the rhythm and lighten the work. Waulking was the final stage in the long, laborious process of producing homespun cloth

[20] During the second visit I was invited to cut peat in Lewis, which I was told is an attempt to maintain tradition and is rarely a cost affective form of fuel (fieldnote 2 May 2003).

on the islands" – was a comment frequently repeated to me and believed by many islanders, despite the fact that employment figures do not agree.[21] Some islanders work off-shore in the oil industry, which is declining. For islanders who have full-time jobs the croft still remains part of their lives. Participants still helped on the croft, though they equated walking the croft with their family looking for sheep with playing. Inevitably, young men and young women still fall in love, but they no longer travel up to the *airigh*.

The crofter has become less dependent on the landowners and more on the Crofting Commission and their subsidies (Hunter, 1996). These subsidies have led to an explosion of sheep on the islands, while the planting of hay and oats has diminished (Wightman, 1996), though I have enjoyed watching a *boddach* wielding a scythe on a late June afternoon. More recently, the Scottish government are paying to remove the sheep from the Highlands and islands. The lazy beds are no longer worked due to an ageing population and the effort involved. The 1884 Heritable Tenancy Act has led many crofters' heirs to live on the mainland or even overseas and who, it is reported, have no desire to lose their hard-won heritage or to work the land (Wightman, 1996). As a result, many crofts stand empty, except for the abundance of sheep, which overgraze extensively (Hunter, 1999). Crofting land needs to be worked or it returns back to peat bog and becomes waterlogged (fieldnote 30 June 2002). Today, the undulating mounds of the lazy beds are tattooed all over the islands and stand as a testimony to previous generations sheer determination to survive (Boyd and Boyd, 1999). The blackhouses are long gone, except for those renovated for the tourist industry, and in its place stand brand new houses, full of the latest technology, DVDs, radios, PlayStations, microwaves, etc. I was told by two elderly crofters and two of the teachers that ruined buildings are also markers of where people used to live, though their enduring physical presence seems to conflict with the 1955 Crofting Act, which granted loans for houses on the condition that the old building was pulled down. Today, the ruins of blackhouses, byres, weaving sheds and sheilings remain dotted standing eerily beside the new modern white houses perhaps maintaining the view that:

> ...before the advent of the planner, when a new house was erected the old place was merely put to a new use as a barn or store, and was seldom razed. In some cases the old home was left to the rigours of wind and rain and allowed to fall into tumble of stones, to become some kind of visual reminder of a former time and style of living (Sinclair and Newton, 1996:45).

[21] Scottish executive employment figures for 2003 show that 9.2% of inhabitants in Harris and Lewis are employed in the fishing industry, of which 3.2% are employed by fish farms.

CHAPTER SIX
FINDINGS

Introduction

The findings chapter has four sections, and in presenting the research findings around participants meanings of land in the Outer Hebrides, I return to the typology (Laurie *et al.*, 1999) mentioned in Chapter Two, which Holloway and Valentine (2000) have employed to analyse and present their research findings around three approaches towards exploring children's everyday lives: (1) a progressive sense of place, (2) everyday spaces as spaces of control, and (3) spatial discourses around childhood that control and mould everyday spaces. [Somewhere, fairly early on, you need to state whether use of italics is participants' or your emphasis]

In Section One, I first explore a dichotomy in Highmore's (1999) list, which is not included in the diagram in James *et al.* (1998) (see page 40), where he proposes the dichotomy should be merged when studying the everyday: the dichotomy between experiences/emotions and discourses/ institutions. While the content of participants' research materials did not produce consistent patterns, a theme did appear within the nature of their own findings: at times most participants had a difficulty in verbally expressing their meanings of land. I present the case that participants' meanings of land were both cognitive discourses and embodied practices embedded within everyday life, in part due to the nature of the multi-sensory methods employed, and as such they were (initially) unsayable. This section outlines a methodological finding, in addition to Chapter Three that explored the third research question: Do participatory methods designed specifically for children perpetuate the concept of child as 'other'?

In Section Two, I draw on the third approach towards studying children's everyday lives (spatial discourses around childhood that control and mould everyday spaces). Throughout my fieldwork patterns appeared in discussions with island inhabitants, visitors to the island and other academics, who predicted what participants would talk about, which did not reflect the complexity or content of participants' meanings of land. The meanings predicted were around traditional objects such as the croft, (cutting) the peat and (naming) animals. I return to the concept of voicing and identity in the conclusion, though in this chapter I lay out the case that participants' meanings of land were more closely linked to everyday practices and movement than static historical objects. This section leads to

Section Three, where I explore participants' meanings of land through Massey's progressive sense of place(1994, 1996). However, research employing this progressive sense of place often focus on the present time-spaces of people's lives, and the past time-spaces of people's lives can be forgotten (Ingold, 2000; Phillimore, 2006). In this thesis, the past generations' knowledge and activities had influenced participants' meanings of land. These human experiences of land reflected Ingold's concept of dwelling (1993) and taskscapes (2000). The fourth section explores everyday spaces and the role of power (or power and resistance from Highmore's list) to control the movement of participants and to mould their identities. This section also highlights that in this thesis, in contrast to Valentine's work, which warns us that constructions of child as angel has led to 'stranger danger' narratives controlling children's everyday public spaces, the main agent of control was the physical environment for all island inhabitants.

Section 1: Experiences/emotions – discourses/institutions

In this section, I explore a dichotomy presented in Highmore's (1999) list, the dichotomy between experiences/emotions and discourses/institutions. Ruling out the possibility that the methods adopted were unsuitable for participants to explore their meanings of land, instead, I turn to the proposition that not only participants' meanings of land were discourses that could be discussed with me but also that meanings were embodied practices embedded within everyday life, in part due to the nature of the multi-sensory methods employed, and as such were (initially) unsayable.

'I don't know really': findings as embodied practice not cognitive discourses

Takako Takano in her PhD thesis, *'Exploring Youth's Relationships with their Environment in Scotland and Alaska'*, reported that the Alaskan Inuits found it difficult to express themselves verbally, though she did not encounter the same problem in her case studies in the central belt of Scotland (2004). Takano also highlights that the Scottish and Alaskan models of environmental education were based around *respect* for the land, though they proposed different definitions. In the Scottish case study, *respect* for land was defined as an ideology accessed through recreation, often outside of everyday life, where humans were visitors to land. In Alaska, *respect* for land was defined as life itself and survival physical well-being and sense of identity, where humans were dwellers and part of land. Participants within my current research aligned themselves more closely with Takano's Alaskan case study than her Scottish case study, though there were inevitable differences.

During workshops participants at times found difficulty in expressing their meanings of land, in particular when discussing more emotional/'aesthetic' meanings of land. First, the individual would attempt to explain their thoughts in words, and then their body would attempt to communicate, in particular with their hands followed by various short bursts of 'uhm ... you know ... let me think ...' finally concluding with 'I don't know'. Mostly I interpreted 'I don't know' to mean 'I know but I can't explain'. And we are reminded by the lyrics of Lou Reid: "Between thought and expression lies a lifetime" (1977). For example, during the workshops and fieldwork the sky and light appeared continually[1]. Linda, Jane and Sue from the Rainbow group attempted to discuss their different paintings of the night skies with me, though they found difficulty in expressing themselves, and independently they each opened their arms and widened their eyes, as though embracing a giant.

Horton and Kraftl (2006:70) contend that "children's geographies could do more" in accessing these embodied non-representational practices. In their paper, they discuss eight ideas current within social sciences: everydayness; materiality; practice; embodiment; ongoings; affect; spacings and excess, which have evolved from post-structuralist post-feminists and non-representational theories. The authors invite researchers to reflect on these ideas for two reasons. First, a greater engagement with these issues will enrich current children's geographies and second, children's geographers could do much to speak to these contemporary lines of thought within wider social sciences. In Chapter Four, I responded to their invitation to develop new methodologies that slow down the everyday and build on the non-representational theories of Thrift (1999). I attempted to speak to the wider academia by dissolving the child/adult dichotomy when developing participatory research methods within this thesis. In this section, I now turn to the concept of everydayness, materiality practice, bodies to outline the nature of participants' meanings of land, which appeared as both unspoken embodied practices and spoken cognitive discourses. Finally, I address the concept of affect in accessing the unspoken embodied practices, since voicing is a key concern in this thesis.

[1] Reading the sky is important on the islands, for the fishermen heading out on boats and for more traditional activities such as peat cutting and haymaking. The habit of discussing the changing skies is common across the UK, though the islands in particular have microclimates which change quickly. Being on the island makes one more aware of the sky, a fact I fully recognised after returning to the mainland. The light has a special luminous quality, which few artists capture, and when an artist succeeds it is conveyed through the interpretation of someone who has experienced this light and recognises the artist's representations.

Everdayness and materiality/Practices and bodies

Everydayness and materiality of our environment facilitate grand theories, useful explanations or poignant political polemic (Horton and Kraftl, 2006) that can be written, as well documented by Thrift and Dewsbury (2000) and Lorimer (2005). The everyday requires slowness and a time to think (Massey, 2002). The materiality also begs a pause for thought and the realisation that the thoroughly complex and contingent materialities which contextualise individual things, and us, in practice; the always-ongoing, "active production, and continual weaving of bits and pieces [from which] we emerge" (Harrison, 2000:5). This awareness might make us cautious about accounts or understandings of everyday lives which are overly "simple, tidy, close and authoritative; which offer cute meanings, straightforward readings, fixed categories or definitive final statements" (Law, 2002)[2].

This focus on practices reminds us that people are always in the "midst of doing things" (Seigworth, 2000:239).[3] This realisation again makes us wary of statements about the world that are closed, certain or final, though as Horton and Kraftl note, this wariness of the unknowability of the world also highlights the inherent openness of knowing. Again, this point brings us to the realisation that many things that get done are "unreflected, lived, culturally specific, bodily reactions to events, which cannot be explained by causal theories (accurate representations) or by hermeneutical means (interpretations)" (Thrift, 2000a:274) and our attention to practice makes us realise how much we do is unsayable (that is actually prior to articulation, or thought per se; "practical rather than cognitive" (Thrift, 1997:126). For example, I observed Andrew from the Town group showing other participants in his group a photograph of a close-up of a grassy bank, a kerb and the road. He offered no words, except, "Look". Each participant who huddled around him became quite animated as they recognised the road outside his house and with intent seriousness he showed me his photograph (Figure 6.1). At the time, I did not understand his meaning as my analysis had not yet revealed the impact of roads and movement within everyday meanings of land, as discussed in sections three of four of this Chapter. Therefore I waited quietly for him to explain. He seemed a little surprised that I didn't immediately understand, though he attempted to explain his thinking but quickly became lost for words, shrugged his shoulders and walked off.

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[2] This methodology while provides participants the space to explore their own work – does not guarantee that the researcher can access the nitty gritty detail of their everyday lives, not because the methodology is not suitable but because some participants meanings of land are not produced in the form of discourses, such as Geoff's discussion around his 'nature walk'

[3] More recently social and cultural theory has paid closer attention to "mundane everyday practices that shape the conduct of human beings towards others and themselves in particular sites" (Thrift, 1997:126-127).

Figure 6.1

These challenges to how humans understand and represent our world are increasingly addressed through the area of non-representation theories (cf. Thrift and Dewsbury, 2000). The question continually raised is how much do we actually know? There are number of researchers who have focused on the practice within children's lives that matter to them, such as playing attending youth clubs or hanging around the streets (Skelton, 2000). Horton and Kraftl comment on the quality of these pieces of research, though they state that "the precise nature of any of these doings – what these verbs actually mean or involved, in and through practice(s) … the complexity, contingency and frequent unsayability of those practices – is perhaps, often underplayed or unexplored" (2006: 76) and more should be done to explore the performativity of these practices. Harper (2005) provides a detailed critique around different theories around playing. He highlights a gap in Suttton-Smith's theories as he focuses only upon play as cognitive discourses, which can be spoken. In Harper's research he returns to school and carries out playing as ethnography, drawing on his own experiences of playing, though in contrast to my thesis pupils' own practice of playing is based upon participant observation. Harper's critique is useful for my thesis as he introduces bodies into his research methodology, and views playing as performance (Thrift, 1999).

Bodies and Affect

Both bodies and everyday lives are intertwined since everything we do is done with and through our bodies; "our embodiment is implicated in everything that we do or say" (Harrison, 2000:497). We experience the world through our bodies; and our body, routines and practices dominate our everyday lives (Valentine, 1999), which are often tacit and unsayable. The methods adopted in my thesis attempted to address the overemphasis on

the visual and the cognitive realms of research findings (Thrift, 2000), through, for example, the sense poetry and the sound maps. These methods invited participants to use their whole body and their different senses in exploring land, and recognised the multisensory nature of the bodies (Rodaway, 1994), which inevitably had an impact upon the nature of the findings (Attfield, 2000). For example, the art workshops produced a number of contemporary paintings that were swirls of colours and lines and as one participant told me 'its how land feels', while another shrugged his/her shoulders and said 'well it's.....'. they didn't finish their sentence but carried on painting in a controlled frenzy. As Horton and Kraftl (2006) note, for researchers who have followed the more traditional 'canon' of children's geographies, a rich resource of observable, mappable, visual, cognitive data about children's lives have been produced (cf. Hart, 1978; Matthews, 1986; Robertson *et al*, 2003). As increasingly discussed within social sciences, for researchers who do not follow these traditional canon, more embodied practices can evolve (Horton and Kraftl, 2000).

In response to the interest in the non-representational of the emotional aspects of our bodies (Harper, 2005) there has been increasing interest in theories of non-representation and the concept of affect. The signature theory of cultural geography's landscape school had been 'representational theories', which, as outlined in Chapter Two, has been critiqued in depth (Lorimer, 2005), for it has rendered framed, fixed and inert all that ought to be most lively (Rose, 2002; Wylie, 2002). In response to human geography's tendency to ignore the non-human world, writers have called for recognition of the way that the material and social intertwine and interact in all manner of promiscuous combinations (Thrift, 2000; Braun and Castree, 2000).

Aitken states that Nigel Thrift's (2004) overview of non-representational theory provides something that is both concrete and relational with his suggestion that affect is 'a sense of push in the world'. The push is towards an emotion and Aitken equates this process as akin to Gaston Bachelard's 'muscular consciousness' of the body in his book the *Poetic of Space* (1969). Following Deleuze (1986), affect alludes to the motion part of emotion that moves back and forth between perception (I-am) and action (I-do). Brian Massumi (2002:22) argues that affect is about something that is not directly accessible to experience and yet is not exactly outside of experience either. Rendering an always pushing and active world, affect is understood as an embodied force rather than some invisible hand. It is that part of relations, connections, interactions and events that we feel and share with others (Harper, 2005). "Different bodies and objects have different affects. An affect is a

relation" (Aitken, 2007:125). Following Spinoza, Deleuze's concept of "a body can be anything; it can be an animal, a body of sounds, a mind or an idea; it can be a linguistic corpus, a social body, a collectivity" (1988:127). Thus, Deleuze's ontology of 'the body' is an opening up, which incorporates the non-human ('an animal'), the non-material ('a body of sounds'), the non-representable ('an idea') and multiplicities ('a social body') (Harper, 2005). Deleuzian bodies are at once material, semiotic, social and incorporeal, as bodies are encountered in our everyday lives. Finally, Aitken states that "affect is a movement of expression that carries stories between different levels of articulation between the embodied and the visceral ... the mythic and actual" (2007:124), which reflects, to some extend, participants meanings of land as discussed in the sections two and three. For now, I turn to question of how to access these embodied practices that proved difficult for participants to explain verbally.

Accessing unspoken embodied practices

Despite increasing writings around these theories, as Wood (2001) has noted, an interest in non-representational thinking/theories and the concept of affect to access embodied practices has rarely produced clear and consistent guidelines on how to collect and analyse this type of embodied practice. In her research on Scottish identity and nationhood through music, Woods adopted a participatory sensing technique where she wrote detailed notes on how she felt as she listened to the music as part of an audience, and later interviewed people at three Scottish music festivals. Harper adopted a similar approach, when he carried out his performance ethnography, though supported by participant observation only. Participants' research material in the form of unspoken embodied practice is a particular challenge within participatory research, when participants find difficulty in articulating their thinking, since adopting participatory sensing techniques moves researchers back to the previously rejected practice of "talking on behalf of others" and is difficult to defend within the political philosophy of participatory research. There are certain affects, which I perceived that I shared with some participants bodies, such as their 'reaction' towards surrounded by a clear star-filled night sky[4].

[4] There was something within their body language that I recognised but I couldn't place, until recently when visiting an old observatory. Here I remembered my unexpected reaction to the night sky in the southern hemisphere, during fieldwork in Papua New Guinea. One night, I was invited outside by a local inhabitant to be shown the Southern Cross. I had been staying in rainforests or towns and had been unable to see the night sky clearly for nearly two months. As we stood silently in a large clearing gazing upwards into, for me, an unknown and immense night sky, instead of feeling my usual sense of wonder I felt deeply unsettled, as though I had suddenly lost my place in the world. The night sky, as seen from the northern hemisphere, had until that moment been a constant throughout my life and part of my daily practice that experienced through my own body, not necessarily in a cognitive form, not one that was easy to express in words.

In his research on politics, cinema, culture and brain research, Connolly (2002) argues that affect is as important to thinking and judgement, as it is to feelings, though the question remains: how does a researcher differentiate between emotions that are personal and affects that are shared? In answer to this question, Harper quotes Massumi (2002): affect 'is not ownable or recognizable' (p28), but 'inseparable from but inassimilable to any particular, functionally anchored perspective' (p35). This answer is unsuitable within participatory research, where the concept of participant voicing is of utmost importance, and therefore this question needs to be explored further, in order for theories of affect to be taken seriously within participatory research. Also from a detailed literature search these social theories are not at the forefront of current discussions.

However, there is an alternative approach towards accessing embodied practices. Harper (2005) argues that playing is not thoughtless but in many instances places more focus on non-cognitive (physical and emotional) processes, though these processes are not completely separate from cognitive thinking. Aitken and Herman (1997) propose that playing 'counters rationality', while Harper proposes that "that many (but not all) playing performances, rather than countering rationality, allow a greater role for the non-cognitive (and therefore seemingly irrational) parts of the brain (Connolly, 2002)." (p59). But in his theorising of playing from discourse to performance, he offers no epistemological or methodological link for his proposition. Here, I would tentatively propose that adopting participatory methods can access the importance spaces between embodied practice and spoken cognitive discourses (Couch, 2001), where participants are provided with sufficient time and space to explore their research material and when the research space has shifted from being an invited space to a claimed space. In this research, some participants discussed their photographs in great detail after being given time to think through what they wanted to say. For example, when I asked John about the war monument (see page 112). In addition, the perceived 'unsayability' of some participants' research material is a characteristic not only of embodied practices but of researchers failing to provide participants with sufficient time and space to reflect on their experiences. Inevitably not all embodied practices can be transformed into cognitive discourses and accessed by the researcher, as experienced in this thesis and highlighted in the next section, such as Kirsty's walk on the beach (see page). This restricted access to participants' experiences maybe due to a participant choosing not to share their thinking, for unknown personal reasons, or because they were unable to articulate their research experiences. As Susan Langer (1997) reminded us earlier in this thesis, emotions are difficult to articulate and Rose (1997) notes the terrain upon which we work will always have gaps and fissures.

Section 2: Children's meanings of land. They will tell you....

In Section Two, I draw on the third dimension of studying childhood space: the control of spaces through constructions of childhood, though the space I refer to here is the space for 'children's' voices to be heard. Throughout the fieldwork patterns appeared within discussions with island inhabitants, visitors to the island and some other academics, who predicted what participants would talk about, which did not reflect the complexity or content of participants' meanings of land. When I was first exploring participants' meanings of land, it would not have been difficult to present the more common perception of the child on the islands: the home, the garden, flowers and crofts. In contrast, my fieldnotes are filled with local inhabitants, tourists and some academics telling me what participants would talk about as meanings of land in particular the croft, 'probably peat' and most definitely the names of animals. The naming of animals, birds, trees, etc., can be a topic easily to attribute to school pupils' meaning of land, and an obvious topic from them to include as these are included within the official school curriculum (cf Robertson *et al*, 2003). However, birds, for example, were not visually depicted, except by John Iain who made a still life picture from his grandmother's china ornaments (Figure 6.2). When birds were mentioned in their data it was about their song, flight patterns or their role as pests. Below I use the examples of the croft, cutting peat and naming animals to highlight that participants' meanings of land were not fixed objects but were untidy, open and embodied experiences, which Ingold equates to landscape as dwelling (1993).

Figure 6.2

Cutting the Peat and naming the animals

The Hill group told me in workshop one that homes were also places that you 'felt secure', that were warm and where fires were made. Peat was mentioned intermittently during all the workshops, though coal was mentioned too but only as a source of fuel. The islands

houses are similar to many mainland houses, except for the open fire that exists in almost all island houses, fuelled by peat and/or imported coal. Within the Scottish Highlands and islands, the fireplace has always been a focal point of the home reflected by the term for the main room *aig an teine* [at the fire][5] (Sinclair, 1997:444). Cutting peat is a traditional activity on the island, though few people now partake, due to the hard work involved in digging the peat and the time required to return to the sites and turn the peat sods until they are completely dry. However peat as fuel is used within many participants' homes, as shown by Irene's photograph of the coal pile in her garden. Few participants discussed the cutting of or use peat in the home, in contrast to some older respondents in the field who frequently told me, if I mentioned peat cutting, "God it was hard work".[6] One participant from the Loch group, who was fit and went on to win every competition on the Sports Day later that week, told me "Cutting peat is fun", while their teacher pulled a face of disbelief and mouthed to me "Oh no, it's not". Connor from the Beach group chose a picture of the only peat stack as he wistfully told me "It's the only one in the area". (Figure 6.3) Irene from the Town group took a photograph of a well formed peat stack near her house (Figure 6.4). Connor's and Irene's photographs were taken for different reasons. Connor, when discussing his photograph, suddenly transformed before my eyes into a *boddach*,[7] who was reminiscing about how life used to be. In contrast, Irene lives on a part of Lewis where peat stacks line the road, skilfully piled high with impressive geometric patterns, though she told me matter of fact "It's where we get our peat...I took the photo on the way to school."

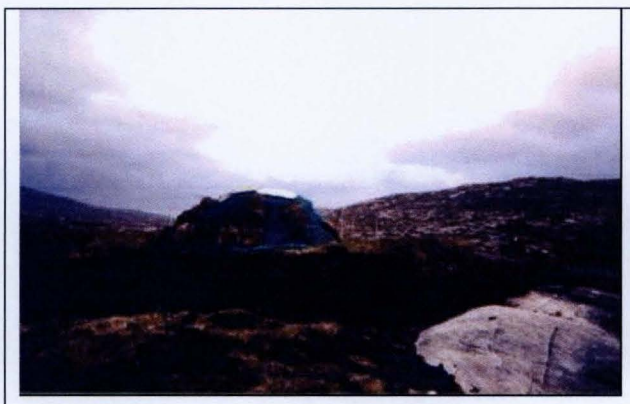

Figure 6.3

Figure 6.4

[5] In the blackhouses, there was often a open space between the animals and the family put there, so it is said, to allow the beasts a view of the fire on cold winter nights. (Macdonald, 1998)

[6] Nancy in the Loch group took a photograph of a coal pile in her garden and had told me that they never used peat in the house but coal also came from land

[7] *Boddach* is Gaelic for an elderly man while *Cailloch* means an elderly woman though the terms do not translate exactly into the English language as the terms are labels of respect linked to wisdom or knowledge.

In the art workshop Shonny from the Hill group chose to draw a picture of a crofter cutting peat in the art workshop (Figure 6.5), filled with all the traditional symbols of the island: the blackhouse, a peat fire. All of Shonny's work was in direct contrast to many of the other participants' work, in all of the groups, which included more modern technologies and daily activities. Shonny, who is on the autistic spectrum, chose to work alone in every workshop quite happily, and frequently told me histories of the surrounding area, the movement of boats, the purpose of the old ruins we could see from the school window. The Hill group consisted of only five participants and when Shonny told historical stories, the others would listen quietly, asking questions about topics they knew little about. His story about the making of seaweed ice-cream started a long discussion about how could you make ice-cream from seaweed. As I read in a Hebridean recipe book (1988), carrageen (a form of seaweed) pudding is a traditional recipe and many of the crofting memoirs write about more traditional forms of cooking (cf. Macdonald, 1985), though Shonny like most of the participants, never named any plants or animals, except for the sheep.

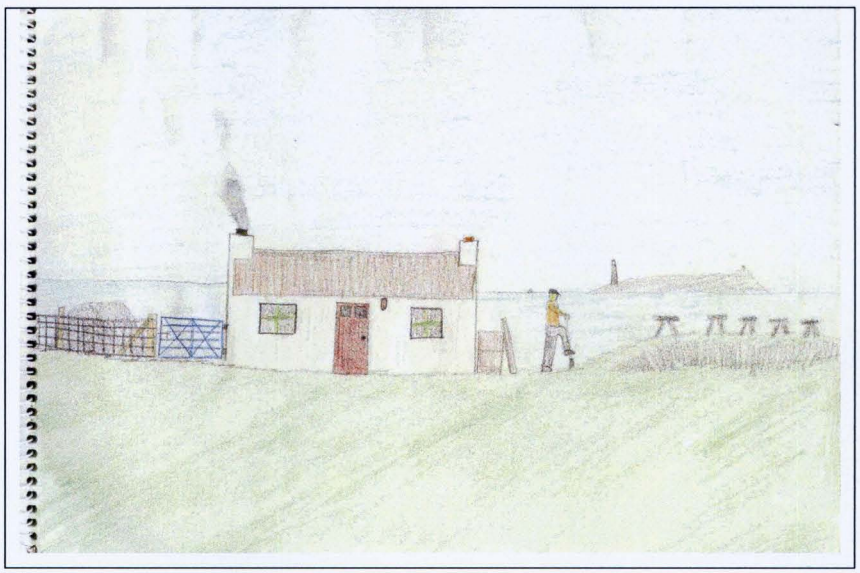

Figure 6.5

During Workshop One, when the Loch group presented their land diagrams to the group, each of the four groups mentioned plants, though no names were given, except for nettles, which I was told "stung you". A group discussion began around why nettles were 'bad'. One recent incomer to the Loch group questioned their views asked, "But what about nettle soup and nettle tea?" The rest of the group looked puzzled but then grudgingly agreed. In contrast, during fieldwork, I had been told that plants were used for dyeing the Harris tweed and patches of nettles were cultivated around dwellings, as were other plants for food or medicine (A. Wilson, 2002 pers. com.). After the first visit to the islands and fieldwork in the Highlands, I increasingly realised that none of the island participants

named any local plant or native animal, which was in stark contrast to participants' research material in the Highland case study, though there were three exceptions. First, fauna was named when participants discussed them as pests particularly in the Beach and Hill groups' discussions. Second, Iain, who had recently moved from the Highlands where his father was a gamekeeper, told me: 'Land is a place where I can learn all about the animals and their names'. Third, Jackson from the Town group described a walk with his father and named each tree in his photographs, describing the trees in detail; I later learnt from him and also his teacher, who knew the family, that his father was interested in natural history and frequently took Jackson on a 'nature walk' teaching him the names of the different plants as they walked. The question I began to ask was: why did the island participants not know the names of local plants and animals, while the Highland group's research material was filled with named flora and fauna[8]? One potential answer was that the wildlife, except for the birds, is significantly lesser on the islands than on the mainland of Scotland, though this answer was evidently too superficial in nature. A more in-depth analysis is considered below.

Land: traditional or modern – object or action

During an extension activity, Connor and John took me to visit the local Harris weaver, Donald, who showed me how to use the loom and invited the boys to 'have a go', though when he light-heartedly offered to train them in weaving they rolled their eyes. Later, as we walked down towards the weaving shed, Donald told me that he could not find anyone interested in learning his trade and along with the declining lack of interest in Gaelic, most of the young people no longer knew the names of the local plants or animals, unlike previous generations where "nothing could flee or crawl passed them without them knowing their names" (fieldnote 4 May 2003.). I told him the story of walking with Angus, a 72 year old fisherman, whose mother tongue and daily language was Gaelic. As we walked along the shore and we talked, I also asked him the names of birds and plants, that I did not recognise, to which he kept replying "I don't know". Eventually I had pointed to an oystercatcher, a common wader, and asked my question. When he replied "I don't know" I then asked "What's the name in Gaelic?" To this he replied "*guille-brighde*".

I realised that he knew the names in Gaelic but not in English. Due to my experiences of working in Mongolia, as an English as a Foreign Language teacher, and from the social

[8] including the more mythical animal - the Loch Ness monster.

forestry fieldwork in Papua New Guineas[9], I had developed an interest in the loss of language and indigenous knowledge and I discussed with Donald whether the names of the flora and fauna had been lost through the decline of Gaelic on the island. He thought yes, though previously I had carried out a literature search and could find no relevant research that highlighted this issue. Later that day, while wandering towards some giant sand dunes with Connor and Calum I noticed a bird circling over head and while Connor ran ahead I asked Calum "What's that?" He looked up and answered "Dunno ... come on let's go". (figure 6.6). I then decided to see which birds he knew and pointing to different birds, I repeated my question, to which he simply replied "Dunno". Finally I asked "Do you know the Gaelic names?" He paused, rolled his eyes and said "God, you like birds, don't you?" I realised that I had been falling into the trap of assuming what island children would/should talk about rather then exploring only what they were talking with me about. For example, within environmental education a standard marker of children's attachment to their natural environment is their knowledge of plants and animals (cf. Kong, 2000). Whether Connor knew the names of the birds was not really established though the important point here is that he was not interested in the names of the birds and chose not to include them in his meanings of land. In reviewing my workshop and fieldnotes, I noted a similar pattern among other participants' discussions when, out of genuine interest, I had asked about what type of bird, animal or tree was in their photograph or painting. As Horton and Kraftl (2006:72) recently wrote "theoretically too much of the 'everyday' is too-often misunderstood or effaced in accounts of children's lives". More specifically, (they) argue: "the 'everydayness' of the everyday is often assumed and left begging critique".

Figure 6.6

[9] In Mongolia the official language of education had been Russian and in Papua New Guinea, the official language of education is English or Tok Pissin, which contrasts with the seven hundred local languages (a third of the world's indigenous languages)

As I analysed the research material, one underlying issue emerged throughout participants' research material, as outlined throughout this chapter: people are land and land is people. Each meaning was being linked to another person, or their own identity, highlighting that many participants positioned themselves as part of land, not disconnected from it, through their everyday lives. Most noticeably in the first workshops with the different groups participants' meanings of land had focused upon objects, such as trees and animals though as the workshops developed participants meanings became more diffuse and complex and shifted from objects towards activities and movement. In all of the participants' discussions they were *doing* things, walking the land playing (an activity not only confined to children) (Harper, 2005)) or travelling from one point to another: from home to school, from school to a friend's house, from home to a relative's house, for a day out, fishing, walking or visiting relatives. Many photographs were taken en route to somewhere and these meanings did not either fit within traditional concepts of island life, such as walking the land or checking the sheep; and included timeless activities such as 'messing around with friends' or more modern/technologically driven activities, such as watching soap operas or playing computer games. In the rest of this section, I continue to present participants meanings of land, though I move away from objects and towards daily activities within the different research locations chosen by participants: the home, around the home, around the island and further afield that leads us to a more progressive sense of place (Massey, 1999).

However, research employing this progressive sense of place often focuses on the present time-spaces of people's lives and the past time-spaces of people's lives can be forgotten (Ingold, 2000 Phillimore, 2006). In this thesis, the influence of past generation's knowledge and activities influenced participants' meanings of land, though these meanings were neither rooted in the past or the present but appeared to shift between these different worlds. These human experiences of land are reflected in Ingold's concept of dwelling (1993) and taskscapes (2000), where inhabitants do not blindly follow the paths of previous generations but are guided while forming their own meanings from within their own daily lives (1993, 2000) as discussed below in Section Three.

Section 3: Progressive meanings of land (across both time and space)

Here, I present a narrative based on participants' daily activities and the contrasts between more traditional meanings of land and modern society, though I attempt to ensure that participants' worlds are not presented as distinct from non-children's world. The aim here is to highlight that participants' meanings of land were not always clearly defined patterns of meanings, shared between the groups[10]. Instead, meanings were untidy, open and embodied "a concept of place as a meeting place, the location of the intersections of particular bundles of activity spaces, of connections and inter-relations, of influences and movements" (Hall, 1995:178) that embodied a sense of dwelling (Ingold, 1993). As outlined in Chapter Two, current perspectives around landscape include an increasing focus on the human experience, what Ingold would term 'dwelling' (1993), and argues for a phenomenological perspective in which the creation of landscape is ongoing:

> In short, the landscape is the world as it is known to those who dwell therein, who inhabit its places and journey along the paths connecting them.... If the body is the form in which a creature is present as a being-in-the- world, then the world of its being-in presents itself in the form of the landscape. Like organism and environment, body and landscape are complementary terms: each implies the other, alternately as figure and ground. (Ingold 2000:193)

Ingold's concept of landscape as dwelling links knowledge of a place to the past and not only to the present, and throughout this engagement humans create meanings of these landscapes, which are also closely linked to the practices of past generations and the social co-existence, which can reshape the landscape. This concept of dwelling relies on concepts of remembering and memory, though contrary to current theories around cultural memory, memories are not necessarily linked to more memorable historical landmark events in our past (Phillimore, 2006), such as the land struggle and land raids, as presented in Chapter Five. Instead as will be shown participants' meanings did not replicate the significant events laid out by the history books but they re-made and re-formed their meanings of land around everyday practices, though these meanings were not uniform in nature. The next section presents participants' meanings of land around the different locations chosen by participants within their research material, which were porous in nature: the home, around the home, around the island and further afield (a progressive sense of space).

[10] However, through out this chapter I attempt to merge this dichotomy and highlight that participants' meanings of land were not framed by their social identity of children nor that the group inevitably shared the same everyday experiences because they lived in the same physical location (Hall, 1995).

Within the home: family and activities

Participants' meanings focused less around the house as a physical building and more around the home as an emotional space within which families lived, including animals, and revolved around daily activities from watching soap operas to using the bedroom as a space and place to play quietly, away from a mother, a single parent who was also periodically unwell. Within the home, the kitchen was presented and discussed by one participant who described in detail the smells and noises of the cooking and the collies coming in at the end of the day. On the island it is common to enter a home through the back door and announce your arrival, as doors are left unlocked, even at night in the rural parts, and it is usual to go to the back door. Greetings involve offers of tea, coffee, cake, even a plate of food, which is hard to refuse, or sometimes a wee dram while local news is exchanged. Within the island homes, the back kitchen is the busiest room in the house (Parman, 1979). In Barchelard's phenomenology on corridors, rooms and corners he writes: " whereas we enter our houses through the front door, we enter our homes through our slippers" (2003:1939). During fieldwork, entering the back door of many Hebridean homes that I visited was similar to Barchelard's metaphor of 'putting on slippers'. Other participants discussed together photographs of their friends visiting playing computer games or after a sleepover for a group of three girls from the Loch group. Sheila from the Hill group included home in her 'land' diagram that was a network of all the activities she carried out in her homes, in particular watching her favourite soap operas, Eastenders and Coronation Street. When I enquired further I was told firmly by her, "Yes, of course, it's all part of land. Land is my home and in my home I do all these things". (She had made a sweeping gesture across her land diagram). Sheila also did not represent the stereotypical rural child, who was in tune with nature (cf. Philo, 2004), and she openly told me that she did not like being outside and had written sense poetry on each photograph, with one saying: "I can hear the cheerful birds making annoying noises". (Figure 6.7)

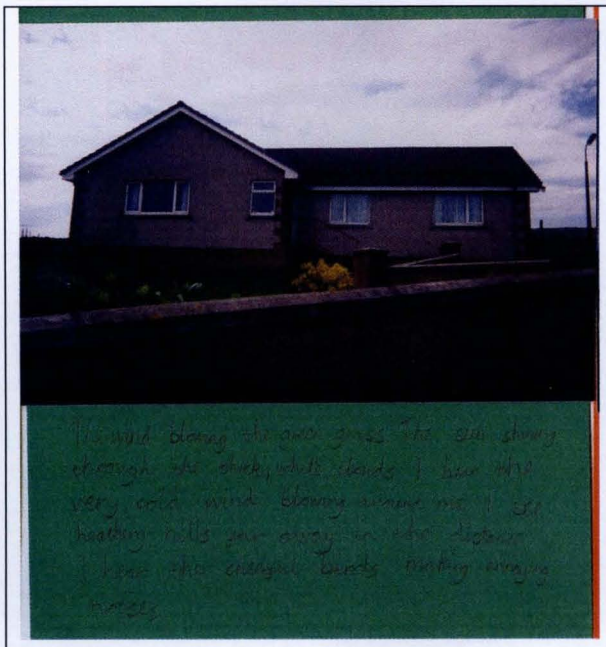

Figure 6.7

Text from photograph:

The wind blowing the green grass. The sun shining through the thick, white clouds, I hear the very, cold wind blowing around me, I see heathery hills far away in the distance. I hear the cheerful birds making annoying noises.

As participants explored various aspects of their lives, they delved into potentially deep and uncharted water. Not all of the meaning of land as 'home' meant being inside nor was home always a haven (James *et al.*, 1998). From one participant, I learnt about a tree she hid in, to escape a difficult home life, and where she told me she "got away from it all", highlighting the difference between house as a physical building and home as an emotional space, and leading me towards the question: if land is home then what is home?. Another participant took a photograph of a graveyard, and since I knew that his father had died the year before I did not press him when he showed me the photograph[11]. During an extension activity, where they took me to the sites of their photographs and at the end of a long enjoyable afternoon of visiting *fanks*, family members, the local Harris weaver, exploring thirty foot sand dunes and counting lambs, he finally took his friend and I to his father's grave, which we tidied up together.

A number of participants presented their families within the home[12], interestingly though some of the photographs discussed were around the family members as they carried out a daily activity, such "This is my dad watching the TV". In other participants' material photographs of families were not 'snapped' as they carried out daily duties but were dutifully posed on, for example, the sofa, then each individual was introduced to me. This style of photography is more reminiscent of when people dressed in their finest clothes and

[11] Later I realised that the graveyard was not where his father was buried.

[12] I address the possibility that some of the participants didn't always think about 'land' but started taking pictures of 'places in the Chapter Seven (the conclusions).

posed for photographs and in many of the older generation's houses photographs form an important part of the good front room, where only visitors are taken. Both Rose (2003) and Chambers (2003) have studied how family photographs are powerful in evoking feelings of proximity, togetherness, order and a gathering-in of those not present.

Buildings as markers for people and people as markers for buildings

Fieldwork respondents frequently told me that family links are important especially in respect to land – and who farmed which piece of land, due to the struggle over land and the land riots, as outlined in the previous chapter.[13] This focus on using a person to locate an object is common within the islands (Parman, 1978). When some participants, and many respondents, explained a physical area of land to me, boundary markers were often explained through who lives where, who used to live there, who worked which piece of land and who is related to whom. A discursive characteristic, highlighted throughout my fieldnotes, is to 'ground' a conversation about a person or a place by finding a family/community link to the subject; a great grandfather's birthplace, the milkman's sister or a fourth cousin.[14] Neighbours were a common marker, but very rarely were they named, although they were known. But, if land belonged to a family member, they were named, which was particularly important in the Beach group and the Hill group. An aunty of a participant in the Beach group whose "land goes up to the woods" was used as a marker a number of times in the boys' pictures.

During fieldwork, visitors to the islands often provided contrasting and useful viewpoints to my own understanding of participants' meanings of land. For example, a cyclist from England staying in the youth hostel had asked me why there were so many ruins beside new houses.(Figure 6.8) Being from Scotland, I was surprised by her comment; surprised, as ruins are common in rural Scotland and I realised that I had become accustomed to this sight. I relayed the cyclist's comments to two crofters born in the early 20th Century, and two of the teachers born in the mid 20th Century. They told me that ruined buildings are sometimes used as markers of where people used to live[15]. Our conversation led to a discussion around the problem of the lack of affordable housing on the islands and the resentment towards absentee crofters and the increasing pattern of mainland Scots buying

[13] People tended to marry within their villages until the early to mid 20th Century (Macdonald, 1978). As result, surnames are important on the island, and frequently I was asked for my surname by locals and I was told with a smile that 'my people' (the Thomsons) come from Tong, Lewis, and were 'an intelligent family of scholars'.

[14] This was noticeable within the Beach groups, while Calum in the Town group took a close up of a new fence post and discussed the importance of keeping the sheep in.

[15] though the buildings physical presence seems to conflict with the 1955 crofting act, which granted loans for houses on the condition that the old building was pulled down.

holiday homes on the island, (MacKenzie, 2006) which were left empty most of the year. Some participants raised this issue during the workshops. For example, Connor from the Beach group pointedly talked about a house, near his home. He told me "It's empty and it's [*pause*] left empty". Sue from the Rainbow group had a similar reaction to a property near her home (figure 6.9).

Figure 6.8

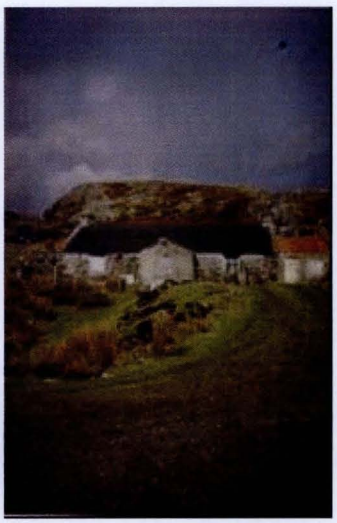

Figure 6.9

However, as many participants did not use family or neighbours to mark or explain their meanings of land and there was no set pattern between whether they came from island families or not. Both Kristina from the Town group and Lee from the Loch group took photographs of new houses being built, which they proudly showed to me. I had become accustomed to participants and islanders placing a story or an object in relation to a person and I assumed that they would know the occupants, but when I asked who lived in the house, they both replied, "I don't know", followed with a look of "What a strange question". Kristina's had been watching the house being built on her daily walk to school (figure 6.10)., while Lee's interest was personal as his family had recently moved to the island and they were building their own house. Lee had shown me a close-up photograph of a local joiner posing against his truck and told me, "He uses wood which comes from land."

Figure 6.10

However, as noted by the feminist anthropologist, Woolf (2000), what is often more enlightening are issues that are not raised. For example, the Hill group is sited in one of the most famous areas for the land raids and holds a monument to those who fought for their crofting rights. Jackson's book: *Reading the landscape* (2000) is based around his interpretations of this particular landscape as deeply embedded within the history of the land raids. This reading and seeing of landscape-as-test has been criticised as a limited perspectival expression of social constructionism (Lorimer, 2005), though Jackson's interpretations were reflected in the Hill group's teacher who spoke at length with me about these land raids. However, neither these land raids nor the land raid monument, were included by participants from the Hill group. In addition, as mentioned earlier, the Rainbow group did not refer to the land buying ceremony, which was a significant media event and had occurred directly after their final workshop. One monument appeared in the Town group's work: the war monument set upon the hill behind Stornoway to commemorate the 1st and 2nd World Wars, though participants discussions referred to monument as something tourists liked to see, rather than what the monument was erected to commemorate. The monument was also used by two participants to mark the time and distance (Jones, 2000) on their journey to school. These meanings of these monuments reflect Tilley's work (1997), based on a phenomenological approach, where monuments as physical objects can have different meanings for those dwelling within that landscape.

Around the home and outside

Being with pets was also part of family activities, which included numerous breeds of dogs, a few cats, hamsters, guinea pigs and rabbits. Cats were photographed sprawled on beds and hamsters in cages. Cats on the island are not commonly seen pets, as dogs are more traditionally kept as working sheep dogs. A dislike of cats in general was raised by various respondents. When participants spoke with me or a peer about their pets, they usually related all of these animals back to being part of the family, and family was land. There was

a continual reference to the fact that each animal walked the land, which also included pet hamsters and guinea pigs who were given the freedom of the garden. In one workshop, there was an interesting discussion between two participants on why dogs link to land. Alan, who had recently arrived from a town on the mainland, went into a long explanation of linking dogs to grass to rain to water to soil ... even I was lost. Jake, who is from the islands, was watching him astonished before he turned to me and said simply: "Dogs are land because they walk on it." Alan's explanation had been a word game. Jake's short explanation contained more that was unspoken (cf. Ingold, 2000); I was aware from previous conversations with him and other locals that to say the dogs walked the land meant that they walked with the men working the land and the sheep. This action of walking the land or 'playing outside' was linked to a more embodied sense of being (Lorimer, 2004), where discussions, or more accurately mimes of crossing waterlogged 'grass', were relayed to me. I was told, stones [rocks] were good to avoid the bog holes, although one group from the Loch group mentioned that rocks were bad because you could fall off them, which created a slight 'disagreement' with the rest of the class. Rain in all the groups was good for the land but bad for mud, which was 'horrible', sometimes 'yucky' and the Rainbow group told me, "You get dirty and then into trouble". I joined in on discussions around mud as I had fallen into a boggy peat hole the day before and was soaked to the top of my left thigh and one participant reprimanded me saying, "I warned you ... didn't I?" During the first workshops with different groups, I had not fully understood when I was told that stones were good for the land but the more I walked the island the more I agreed with this sentiment that to move around this water ladened topography without the aid of stepping stones was difficult (Boyd, 1997).

Sheep and lambs was included as part of family by Connor and Iain John in the Beach group and were linked to various activities. Shonny from the Hill group choose a couple of pictures with the *fank*[16] in the background, which he spent a long time talking to me about. Connor and Iain John took me to a *fank* on our extension activity. Susan Parman (1993) in her ethnography has a photograph of a *fank* on the cover and during summer fieldwork I often cycled around the islands where I would meet and greet groups of islanders sitting around a *fank* waiting for the sheep to arrive. The sheep are such an integral part of James' family that he had taken a photograph of three full grown sheep (Figure 6.11) and told me, "The tups[17] are to remind me of my dad, Iain John Morrison" (using an islander's full name is sign of respect), though another photograph of a raider jumping a fence was to remind

[16] Communal pens on the hillside where the locals meet to dip and shear the sheep.
[17] Tups are a Scottish word for young rams.

him of a bright sunny day rather than the animal (Figure 6.8). During the art workshop, Hamish from the Rainbow group brought in some sheep's wool found on the ground and made it a sheep in his painting, while Ian from the Town group painted some sheep into the foreground of a painting of the Callenish stones, and he searched for about twenty minutes looking for the right material to make the sheep 'feel and look right'. Eventually, he found some cotton wool in the back of the science cupboard. These participants come from long standing crofting families, though so did other participants who however, did not choose to include sheep, in any form of representation, within their meanings of land. In fact, Ian's discussion around the Callenish stones, with the sheep in the foreground, revolved around 'things' that tourists liked to visit and throughout his research material he refers to the icons of the tourist industry. In contrast to some, though not all, the older generation of crofters who I met and talked with, viewed the sheep with great affection. During the second visit, I was told by the mother of one participant from the Rainbow group, "I don't care that these [eagles] are protected. I would shoot one any day. It's hard when you look after this little lamb and then the bird takes it. It's like one of your own. No I don't like them, they should be shot."

Figure 6.11

In the Beach group, the only time that all participants mentioned the names of animals was when they referred to them as pests, such as the mink - they were 'very bad'. When Shonny from the Rainbow group took me on an extension exercise, he gave me a large stick and told me, "Now if you see a mink, you need to bash on its head like this" (he demonstrated with his stick beat the ground ferociously). Later he took me into some sheds and proudly showed me how to set the mink traps, though he warned me, "Stand back ...they might take your fingers off". The Beach group also told me that rabbit burrowing and seagulls feeding caused problems with potato patches and I was given a lesson on trapping rabbits. Crows were despised especially since, as I was told, "They peck out the eyes of [newborn] lambs". However, one participant told me in hushed tones,

"Buzzards. I love to watch them fly around. Up above". He did not want the others in the group to hear his words and seemed slightly embarrassed as buzzards also prey on lambs. In the Hill group, John, the son of a gamekeeper recently moved from a large Highland estate to the islands, also talked about controlling pests that started a heated debate with the other participants in the group, reflecting a longstanding conflict between islanders and landowner's gamekeepers (see Chapter Five), and gamekeeping was said to be 'cruel'. One participant became quite emotional and told me "It's sad... they kill things". Sandy sat quietly, clearly accustomed to these discussions, while I was told that, "They [gamekeepers] kill seals and shoot otters and birds...". Sandy agreed and had begun to taunt them with stories. In contrast in the Beach group, when I asked if seals were ever shot, Connor looked at me shocked and replied "*No.* You can go to prison if you kill seals." I knew of and had seen seals being shot out-of-season, to protect the fish farms as they compete for the salmon (fieldnote 6 Jun 2003). This seal 'culling' is legal when the 'offending' seal can be identified and permission is granted and only at certainly times of the year (Calum pers. com.). Some locals are offered a salmon in return for shooting a seal, and though most refuse, the seals are still shot, reportedly by fishfarm employees (fieldnote 12 June 2002). The fish farms are perceived to be an important part of the island economy though from fieldwork notes, the killing of seals still tends to be considered as unacceptable, because seals are a traditional part of island folklore and killing a seal brings bad luck (Macaulay, 2000). This attitude appeared in both the Hill and Beach groups' research material.

Traditionally on the islands, each family has a 'tatty patch', sometimes on a piece of communal ground, which would feed the family during the winter (Macdonald, 1988). Only the Beach group took photographs of tatty patches, their own and the neighbours and they told me about visiting the tatty patch and working the patch. (Figure 6.12.) Potatoes were highly thought of by the Beach group and were discussed as one of the important things about land, in the first workshop. During my second visit, during a home economics lesson, I learnt that Connor, Iain John and James were not fond of vegetables, except for 'maybe carrots and peas', though as soon as potatoes were mentioned, their eyes lit up and the discussions turned to the family's potato plot. In contrast, James from the Beach group never discussed his family's potato patch but instead talked about his 'small egg business'. He kept some chickens and he sold eggs to the neighbours, this activity was frowned upon by the teacher who told me "He is getting above himself".

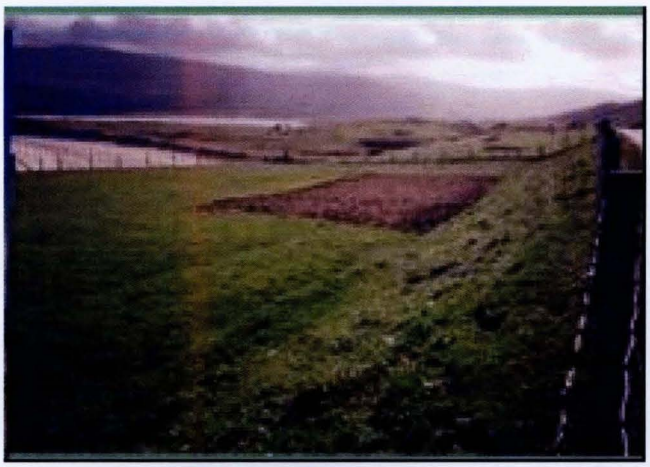

Figure 6.12

Other participants took me around a tour of their gardens through their photographs pointing out yellow flowers though they never mentioned their names. Others, while discussing photographs of their houses, talked at length about what they could see from their house as a part of daily routine. For example, Zena from the Loch group told me, "This is what I can see *every morning* [from my bedroom window] when I wake up". Joseph from the Town group said pensively: "*This*[18] is what I see ... *every time* I leave the house I walk through here". In contrast, other participants' focus upon the view that they could see from their house and not what they could see. Anne from the Hill group created a panorama from two photographs telling me, "This is the view from Mrs. Macaulay, the sewing teacher's house" (Figure.6.13). Anne also said, "I thought it's quite nice with all the hills and the different shades of grass." Many participants were fascinated by the sky and sunsets and dramatic cloud formations. Similar discussions took place around 'land' with comments such as, "Can you see the sun sparkling on the water? ...If you look closely you can see the ripples moving across the water", "Look at the beach see it shimmering in the sun" (Figure. 6.13)., "Look...the dark clouds...the light..." (Figure 6.14). The focus on the emotions and an aesthetic appreciation of the land appears to move participants into a more visually inspired concept of land, though as Vergunst (2006) argues aesthetic appreciation can be an alternative approach towards being in and experiencing landscape.

[18] Italics indicate the spoken stress of participant's words that I had noted in my field notes

Figure 6.13

Figure 6.14

Figure 6.15

Around the Island

Not all the activities discussed revolved around the space in or around the house or garden. Some participants chose excursions out with families. Jen from the Loch group showed me photographs of a Saturday, fishing with her father and little brother (Figure 23) and told me, "That was a good day...*[long pause]*..."[19] [20]. Activities outdoors, further away from their homes, which could be labelled 'playing', were evident in their research material, though while it is commonly accepted that "playing has a place and a time" (Winnicott, 1971:41), apart from this broad statement there are no clear definitions of what playing is (Winnicott, 1971; Aitken, 2001; Harper, 2005). However, many authors make an implicit link between playing and children through their studies (Harper, 2005), including work on the provision and use of (often outdoor) play facilities (cf. Valentine and McKendrick, 1997). Other studies have explored the actual practices of playing in after-school clubs (Smith and Barker, 2000) public playgrounds (Gagen, 2000), commercial leisure spaces

[19] I had gone fishing with one friend and I was aware that fishing was a common activity on the island, no longer as a source of food but as relaxation, though no other participant mentioned fishing

[20] During my first visit in late spring/early summer, when days are long, and the second visit in late winter/early spring, when the nights are long].

(McKendrick *et al.*, 2000) and within the rural 'developing world' contexts (Punch, 2000). Harper argues that this link to playing and childhood contains two tacit agreements. Firstly, it presupposes the connection between playing and childhood to be self evident and something called 'child's play' exists, often perceived as separate from the activity of adults. As James *et al.* (1998) wrote "the culture of childhood might be seen in the linguistic and playground games of children, a collective culture, enduring and separated off from the adult world" (p. 99). Harper has argued that certain statements about playing should apply to all people, rather than just limited to young people and his words engage with current debates in children's geography, around the differences and connections between adults and children (Jones, 2003; Philo, 2003), and the blurred boundary between adulthood and childhood (Valentine, 2003) as discussed in Chapter Three. The second tacit agreement proposed by Harper is that play is often presented as liberating while it can also be controlling. I return to this second issue in the next section but for now I explore Harper's first issue.

Within this research participants 'play' activities were varied and were also shared with older members of the community, such as playing football[21], which is also a marker of identity on the islands. Other participants discussed photographs of where they played outside of school, such as down at the beach, and two female participants from the Loch group photographed and told the group about an old quarry that they often go and spent time in. However, for some participants playing was neither work nor play as fun, but produced a mix of activities. For example, Mairi had taken a photograph of a sunset, which she shared with me and told me "I took it when I was out walking with my father ... last night ... ". She told me that she often walked with her father in the evenings, though it took me two weeks to realise that 'walking with her father' meant walking the land with him in the evening to check on the sheep and the fences. On our extension exercise, Connor and Iain John's playing involved running around, and up and down the sand dunes, which was interspersed with counting the lambs to check if any new ones had been born that needed to be registered and tagged (Figure 6.16). On a long walk with the Loch group, I was taught how to prise up limpets, which they then attempted to convince me tasted good raw. They did not. Later we found a dead sheep, a common site on the islands, and I waited while one of the participants noted the number, which they all memorised to report to the local crofting officer when we returned. For other participants play was also carried out with members of their family. Kirsty from the Rainbow group

[21] Unsurprisingly, many a football pitch found itself in pride of place in the Loch notebooks along side posters of football heroes.

discussed a series of three photographs in her notebook that were, "A Sunday walk with my family ...we had a picnic on that beach...we had fun". I also knew this walk, in particular the photographs of the beach that she was showing me, where there were footprints all around the sand, big and small, showing people running and walking, though this participant found it very difficult to explain her photographs.[22] (Figure 6.17)

Figure 6.16

Figure 6.17

Moving around everyday lives within the islands

Roads, in some form or other, was a common topic within participants' research material many were linked to cars, vans or lorries, while one participant from the Town group took a photograph of her bike and a road stretching into the distance (Figure 6.9). Roads were included almost immediately in all of the land diagrams and subsequent discussions. During Workshop One, the Beach group linked hills to soil, tracks and ATVs (all terrain vehicles). These were labelled good and 'tracks' led to 'roads' and to 'cars'. Two participants from the Rainbow group were fascinated by the restructuring of a local bridge and followed the progress daily to and from school. One morning during a workshop break they ran out into the playground as a digger trundled past, and shouted, "Is it the Mercedes or the Daewoo working today?" Listening to their discussion on the benefits of each make reminded me of listening to Jeremy Clarkson on 'Top Gear', though it would be easy to attribute their discussions simply to 'boys and their toys'. But the seriousness of their focus should not be underestimated as I have heard this topic in other islanders' daily conversations. My fieldnotes hold descriptions of me walking parts of the old roads which

[22] What was also interesting was that this walk was on a Sunday, when traditionally, till quite recently most families in Harris would stay at home and attend only the church, indicating that while the children were expected to remaining the same, as reflected in respondents words, older members of the family were changing their own patterns of life.

cross the islands, scrambling up and down cobbled paths invaded by grass and eroded by wind and water, then driving, walking or hitching along the level tarmac roads increased my understanding of the importance of the transport system. However, the men repairing the road are often local and known to the participants, raising the question of whether their meaning of land was linked to relationships with people.

I also began to realise that photographs with home and houses in the background, which participants would avidly point out to me, reflected the distance and time taken to travel from point to point. Most participants had taken photographs of the roads that passed their houses and explained where they went to and where they came from. Anne, who lives in a very remote area, showed me a photograph of her croft taken from the main road (Figure.6.18). She told me "Can you see that dot far in the distance. Look. Can you see it? That's my house. And behind on a clear day you can see Skye".

Figure 6.18

In asking them to revisit the sites of their photographs in their everyday land I had also assumed that this land would be routine, mundane and everyday (Highmore, 1999; Sherbourne, 2001). However, many of their meanings of land were not the mundane, but embodied the spectacular and the emotional within that moment in time, as discussed earlier. Some of these discussions were about capturing a moment in time (Thrift, 2000). For example, when I suggested to participants to take their photo notebooks to the same location and take notes around their senses, Jill from the Hill group said, "But I could never capture that sunset again, the clouds wouldn't be in the same place, nor the sun" (Figure 6.15). This comment reflects the work of Hamish Fulton, whose works of art I used in Workshop Two and who highlights that we may take the same journey everyday but we still experience different sights, smells and emotions. In addition, some participants

were not physically able to return to the production of the photographs. Not all of the meanings of land were linked to a physical place on the island, though they were not conceptual in nature but linked to Massey's progressive sense of place (1997).

Further afield: more progressive sense of place

As outlined in Chapter Four, one meaning of land raised that was completely unexpected was the Iraq war. During my second visit, war had been declared on Iraq, and while I had watched the events unfold I realised after talking with some participants from the Town group that I had not been watching as closely as they had. During the project, some participants within the Town group discussed at length the political ideologies underpinning the Iraq war zones. One participant asked me: "did you know, it's never been about people's freedom? ... it's all about oil ... access to oil ... for Bush and Saddam ...". I slowly realised that I had expected that the environment would be that which was physically around the participants. My concept of the geography of locality had been too narrow. In anthropology, Jim Wafer (1991) and Henry Wolcott (2004) caution against viewing the anthropological field as a clearly defined physical space defined by geographical boundaries and the anthropologist's temporal experience, while in *Sitting Culture*, the Scandinavian ethnographers Karen Olwig and Kirsten Hastrup warn against the Western preoccupation of assuming culture is linked to physical boundaries (1997). Here I return to Holloway and Valentine's first dimension in their typology (2000) of exploring children's everyday lives: Massey's progressive sense of place (1997). Here "the local and global are not understood in terms of universality and particularity but as shaped by a mutually consisting sets of practices" (Holloway and Valentine, 2000:767). On one side, global processes are shown to be both global and local and operate in specific local areas, and as such shape the area and are also remade during this process (Katz, 1994; Latour, 1993; Thrift, 1995). On the other side, understandings of local social relations as locally situated and rooted in place have been critiqued, in particular by Massey (1998) who argues that local cultures should be understood as products of interaction between the local and global, an open system of meaning-making, which is neither entirely local nor undifferentially global in nature. As such the local and global are not split, but intimately bound together. Various geographers have explored this merging of the local and global in understanding young people's everyday lives, in particular Katz's work with youths in Sudan and New York youths (1996). In this thesis, the merging of the global and local in meanings of land appear from both the global influencing the local cultures, through the presence of an exotic animal in everyday meanings of land and an affection for trees, and also through

local cultures maintaining the concept that people are good for land, despite increasing dominant environmental discourses around humans are destroying the planet.

Macro to Micro: everyday land - Saddam, Coronation Street and Bengal tigers

As outlined previously, generally participants did not choose to name the plants and animals on the island and where animals were mentioned by participants, they were sheep pets or pests, though one animal featured was not in this category: a Bengal tiger. Jeff from the Town group took a photo of a photograph of a tiger that sits on top of a cabinet in the classroom (Figure 6.19). When I spoke with Jeff from the Town group about his photo of the Bengal tiger, he was very clear that the tiger was part of everyday land. In fact, he expressed mild surprise at my puzzled look and he continued to explain in more detail to ensure that I understood his reasoning, "The tiger is part of land because it's part of the rainforest. And I see it every day… it sits on top of that cabinet [in the classroom]."

Figure 6.19

During the art workshop with the Loch group, four participants created a working model of a football pitch and played a game with a ball of blue-tack. Beside them, another group of five participants from the Loch group had created a three dimensional 'desert island' that had a palm trees, a volcano spouting paper fire from the top and a moving whale tail in the sea (see page 93). When they took me around their work of art explaining each part of the island including the small hut where someone lived, I did not hide my surprise at their choice of topic and I was gently chided and told, "But you said we could do what we wanted." Then I was told with complete seriousness, "Well …this is everyday land. There *are* volcanoes and whales swimming in the sea." However, the wider global world does not always impact on localised knowledge systems (Bender and Winder, 2000).

Earlier with the same group, when they had presented their diagram of land, a group discussion had begun around the fact that land and drugs were bad. When the teacher and I asked why, the group just kept insisting that land meant drugs. The teacher and I had

puzzled over the connection and jokingly asked the group if being a drug baron was the government's new alternative to sheep farming. After the workshop we discussed the issue again, and the teacher equated their comment on land being drugs to watching documentaries on TV about growing cannabis somewhere overseas. However, later that week I saw a flyer on vigilance for drug trafficking by sea pinned inside a local shop at waist level, which shed light on the Loch group's insistence that land meant drugs, and highlights two important points about their meanings of land. First, the importance of roads and movement was developing within participants' meanings of land. Second, as Harvey (1996) states there should be no assumption that global knowledge system will dominate over more local knowledge system. However, while analysing participants' research materials I realised that I had assumed that one dominant discourse would appear when discussing meanings of land: the current discourses around the environmental crisis.

Micro to Macro: everyday land - global environmental discourses

Due to my work and research experience in fair-trade and environmental ethics and education, I became aware of a notable lack of discussions around global environmental crises, such as climate change, the destruction of the rainforest, etc. As Jones and Owain (2002) write "the idea of a global environmental crisis is now so familiar that there is almost a condition of environmental passion fatigue at work in the popular consciousness" (p100). Takano's (2004) work with young people from central Scotland produced discussions around these narratives of environmental crisis. Grundy's research (1999) with young people from Edinburgh and Gauntlett's work (2000) with young people in the south-west of England also raised a number of environmental discussions, though when researchers raised these questions themselves, it was hard to predict whether participants would have raised the same issues independently. In addition, and in contrast to participatory work, Gauntlett also stated that he had to "continually correct them on their understanding of environmental issues" (2000:5). These types of environmental discourses as crisis were predominantly absent, though not completely, and a less expected discourse appeared that rather than people being bad for land people were good for land and the two 'bodies' were intertwined. I now turn to these issues.

The topic of trees, though mostly unnamed trees, appeared in participants' work, which may not appear surprising, though traditionally islanders are not overly fond of trees (Macdonald, 1999) as I was told during my fieldwork. Within many cultures trees are often perceived as positive cultural icons (Jones and Cloke, 2002), though trees can produce narratives of fear, due to their physical presence (Burgess, 1993) or through fairy stories

such as Little Red Riding Hood, moral tales to prevent young woman from venturing too far alone. However, islanders who I had talked with who disliked trees were not afraid of them, but as I was told by one participant in the Beach group, "What is their point?" Jones and Cloke's interesting book on *Tree Cultures* (2002) makes no mention of a dislike of trees for this reason[23]. The Hebridean participants who had mentioned trees, apart from the one participant who disliked them, commented on their aesthetic appeal, bloom, the bark, the cones or simply their presence within a relatively treeless landscape. A number of individuals excitedly pointed out trees to me in their photographs that they could see on their travels and were specks in the distance[24]. Mary from the Hill group held up a photograph for me, from a day trip to Stornoway with her mother, she had gone to visit some friends but her main stories were around her photograph of trees in blossom and she told me with a smile, "Look at the pink trees". She was not interested in naming the tree but had enjoyed its colour and the unusual site of a tree in full bloom, a Himalayan cherry tree. In contrast to research by Takano (2003), Grundy (2000) and Gauntlett (2000), these participants did not raise any discussions around environmental problems with regard to trees. Some discussions amongst participants did highlight the problem of air pollution, while presenting their diagrams on land in the first workshop. The Loch group discussed problems with fumes and pollution from factories, although there are almost no factories on the island[25]. There was a minor concern about litter, due to new blue dolphin litter bins being placed in the playground, and an issue I return to in the conclusions section, though when one participant commented that people were bad for land, a heated debate began on *why* were people bad for land. Throughout the fieldwork, none of the meanings of land led to people and land being bad, in fact the opposite opinion appeared during the art workshops. In the Hill group, each group produced a work of art that had incorporated handprints. As mentioned in Chapter Four (see page 93), one participant created a work of mixed media artwork from different grass, each with a different texture, that she had collected and were placed around her own handprints in paint. One group had painted a two-dimensional landscape of blue sea and brown hills with a large rainbow across the middle and in each corner they had placed handprints, which I was told, "They are people on the land". When I asked about whether the handprints meant that people were good or

[23] However, I have witnessed a similar attitude from Papuan coastal clans (Thomson, 1996), who displaced by a volcanic eruption were relocated by their government to interior rainforest. Here these clans whose income was from coffee beans, felled the surrounding rainforest and planted coffee to the dismay of the local forest communities, who told me: "they are worse than the loggers".(p66).

[24] As I live near woodland the island to me appears predominantly treeless.

[25] I wish to a highlight an alternative approach towards understanding participants meanings of land. When I presented the more unexpected images of meanings of land, in particular Coronation street, the Iraq war and the Bengal tiger at a children's geography conference, the discussion did not turn to a progressive sense of place. Instead the conversation turned to the similarities between my paper and bradford's paper, which argued that children's virtual reality world was just as real as the physical world that they lived in.

bad for the land, they were quite shocked that I should suggest that people were bad for the land. The Hill group then discussed together why people were good. People became family who, I was told, "teach you", "keep you safe", are "clever ... smart" and they "help you". Finally, Louise told me her voice filled with deep respect, "They shear the sheep". All the others, except a recent incomer, nodded in agreement.

However, while the concept of land and people were intertwined, some local environmental problems were highlighted by the Beach group. Similarly in Takano's (2003) work with the Inuits, the group did not did not raise any global discourse around environmental problems but rather discussed the impact of climate change on their daily lives. When Takano went polar bear hunting with the Inuit group, they discussed the problem of food supply as the ice-flows had changed significantly and so had the behaviour of the polar bears, which made hunting more difficult. The Beach group discussed similar local level environmental problems around the loss of wildlife through the introduction of the mink, as well as the loss of black-backed seagulls through the introduction of the non-native hedgehog to the island. Interestingly, the teacher told me that they were making the stories up, though I was aware that these seagulls were a ground nesting species and that their numbers were dwindling on many of the islands (Boyd, 1999).

Section 4: Everyday spaces as movement and control

In this final section, I turn to Holloway and Valentine's second dimension in their typology: the concept of everyday spaces. This as discussed in Chapter Three, are no longer understood to have fixed characteristics or to act as a backdrop for social relations: a pre-existing physical object that exists outside of and frames our everyday lives and vice versa. Social identities, meanings and relations are recognised as producing material and symbolic or metaphorical spaces.. "Space is always in the process of becoming. It is always being made" (Massey, 1999:283). Space is also about control and is never neutral. In this section, I turn to the issue of control within the different spaces chosen by participants. Currently within research with children there are criticisms of the overemphasis on the controlling of children by society's fear of stranger danger, which as Valentine (2000) argues has been constructed from the concept of child as angel and in need of protection, as discussed in Chapter Two. Here, I present the case that the choice of research locations by participants, such as in, around and further away from the home was not perceived as excessively controlled by adults through fear of stranger danger (Valentine, 2000) but by the physical terrain and the ability to negotiate a confined network of roads served by a limited public transport system[26].

Research sites: land as dwelling – control and access

James *et al.* (1998) studied the home, the school and the city and explored the "control and regulation of the child's body in and through regimes of discipline, learning and development, maturation and skill" (p38). Holloway and Valentine (2000) building on that research explored the sites of the school and the home in children's use of information and communication technology. In this thesis, the sites of meanings of land were widespread from the home to the immediate outside, journeys from home to school, to a friend or to a member of the family. I briefly consider the school and the home space before discussing the wider community space within this 'rural' island environment, and highlight the dominance of movement and roads.

School space

The workshops were held in the school but overall the indoors 'school' space, though it appeared in some notebooks, were not discussed. Only Jackie and Alec, who are siblings,

[26] In negotiating the physical terrain parents were not seen as controlling but liberating and parents identities included images of their cars as part of a network of objects. Land as an agent of control did not only act upon inhabitants who were too young to drive, but for inhabitants who could not drive or who did not have the resources to buy a car

discussed the school space as a location. Alec had taken photographs of their old rural school, which was one of the five small schools that had been shut down in the previous year. They told me that their school "was the best school in the world" and took me there during an extension activity. We had climbed into the old school building and they took me around the dilapidated rooms, empty and filled with pools of water and explained each space to me, reminiscing about what they had studied in each room. Previously they could walk to school, though now they had to wait for the school bus to take them the five miles to the Loch school. Two participants had taken photographs of the bus shelter at the end of their road, which resembles a Second World War bunker built to stand the Hebriddean weather. They told me, "This is where I wait for the school bus in the morning ...it was pouring this morning ..." In contrast, other photographs and discussions, from the Loch and Hill participants, were of the school playground. When I asked Jackie, Ellie and Laine about their photographs they replied, "Oh we're having fun and just being silly". Mary from the Hill group took photographs from the playground of the surrounding hills, where she said she walked with her father in the evening.

All the schools were beside a road, and from a dead-end for the Rainbow group, where the fences were seen to keep the ball from the playground in, rather than the children. The Hill group's school was beside the main busy road that ran along the island and was a particular danger spot, and Sheila took my arm and warned me "Roads are bad and can be very dangerous" though Shonny contradicted her and replied "Roads are good ...how would I get home?" The Loch group's school was beside the same road, though the playgrounds were large. In the Beach group's school, we build a fence during home economics lesson, not to keep the pupils in but to keep the sheep out of the garden and the school's tatty patch. In the Town group's school, the playgrounds were large and only one participant commented on the danger of the roads, through a photograph of the local lollipop person, who she told me guided her safely across the road. Ellie had recently moved from living on the continent and her choice of photograph surprised the rest of the group as they discussed it. However, the place of roads in their everyday lives arose in all of the participants' research material, in some form or other.

Within the school context participants took and discussed photographs of what they saw on the way to school. All the participants in the groups, except for the Town group, had to take a bus to school due to the distances from their homes. Some photographs were taken from the school bus, though not all related to the journey but to what they could see. James from the Beach group took a blurred photograph of his grandfather's island that, as

he told me, he saw everyday on the way to school through the bus window. He was one of the few participants who openly disliked school, as he saw little point in learning maths, etc., when he wanted to be outside "doing other things ... I have a small egg business, you know?" His journey to school took him to a place he did not want to go and passed a place where he wanted to be on. James' discussions of the photograph were around how much he loved visiting the island, to check on the livestock and set mink traps, and also to take paying tourists during the summer months. For him, his most enjoyable and important journey was depicted in the art class, when he painted the new rib boat that took tourists and his family over to the island. He took great care in painting the boat crossing the sea, and in contrast to his normal slap-dash approach towards his school work, he continually asked me for painting techniques to ensure that the black outlines of the boat were not painted over by the blue paint for the sea, that the white paint on the boat stayed pure with no stray colours seeping in, and how to portray the waves crashing against the hull to depict the speed of the rib.

Home space

In their research, James *et al.* (1998) highlight the increasing domestication of childhood over the past two centuries, which has led to increasing discourses that state home is the place for the child. And in the mid 1950s some researchers stated that children's mental well-being was at risk if they were separated from their mothers for too long (Bowlby, 1953). These ideas have tended to create a negative perception of working mothers who place their young children in childcare, though research by both Holloway and Laurie *et al* (1999) has questioned this cultural construction and proposed that collective day care can produce a more stimulating environment for children. In addition, homes are not always safe and secure havens, in particular as research has shown, it is the site of most sexual abuse (James *et al.*, 1998). And as outlined above, not every participant found their homes were the places they chose to be in. There is also a dearth of research on children being interviewed in their homes; in part as the home is often a place that researchers have difficulty accessing, and in a recent paper Nilson and Barbara (2005) question why research with children is too often held in the school[27]. There has been criticism within the new social studies of childhood that there is a predominant focus on the child within the home and as part of the family. In this research, it is the participants who chose the site of their photographs within and around their homes. Their reasons for choosing this location was attributed to their enjoying being indoors rather than because they were being forced to stay inside. In addition, the presence and role of the family on the islands still remains

[27] I was invited to edit an initial version of the paper and to defend my choice of school-based workshops.

within everyday lives, as outlined in the previous section. Parental/adult control, as discussed below, did not openly arise within participants' research material, though the ability to physically move away from many of the island homes and move around the island, would depend on access to available transport for any island inhabitant.

Island public space

Mathews (1995) and Jones (1997) state that there exists a common perception that the countryside offers a safe place to raise children and a space where children have the freedom to roam and explore their environment[28], based on the concept of the child as natural as discussed in Chapter Two. And "as with any myth, however, it is not as important to question whether it is true, as it is to question whose truth it is" (Short, 1989 in Giddings and Yarwood, 2005:102). Particularly within human geography, research has exposed this concept as a myth and the geographies of young people are far more complex than these ideals suppose (Skelton and Valentine, 1998; Phillips, 2001; Panelli, 2002; Matthews, 2003; Halfacree, 2004). Predominantly human geographers have explored this area of children and control of rural public spaces, and Giddings and Yarwood (2005) states that within geography, these themes have been studied in three ways:

a) Children are coerced to fit into adults' views of public spaces, which is based on the concept of a passive child.
b) Children have their own agency and resist adult authority and control.
c) Research has shown that different public spaces are used for a range of purposes by children, including adventure, solitude, to be with friends and to escape authority (Matthews *et al.*, 1998).

Their paper is useful in outlining the current body of work around children and rural spaces, though in Valentine's (2001) more recent work around children's use of public spaces and adults' fear of stranger danger particular to rural spaces, is absent. In addition, the concept that children are active agents subject to wider passive social forces is not discussed. Using similar literature, I aim to highlight one theme that is not mentioned within these studies:

a) Children as active agents are also subject to wider social forces, with the exception of Valentine's (2000) research which highlights issues of control around parent stranger danger concerns, though a more dominant agent of control appears in my research for all island inhabitants: the roads.

[28] a synthesis of innocence, wildness play, adventure, the companion ship of other children, contact with nature, agricultural spaces and practices, healthiness, spatial freedom, and freedom from adult surveillance. (Jones, 1997:166)

And three additional themes that are highlighted within this body of work:

b) Despite the recognition that children have diverse identities and engage in heterogeneous activities within rural spaces, children within my research area continue to be othered from adults.
c) The concept of the rural spaces are generalised across Britain and the concept of urban and rural are held to merge, though both terms are difficult to define (Shucksmith, 2000), which leads to a rejection of the importance of situated knowledge.
d) Materiality of these 'rural' spaces is recognised in terms of English land law and intensive farming. These spaces do not replicate 'rural' spaces in Scotland nor island communities.

Research on the passive child within rural spaces and surveillance

Jones (1997) and Horton (2003) state that rural areas are widely perceived as a place of play and adventure and capable of offering some children the privacy that they find hard to gain inside the home (Eubanks, 1988; Valentine, 1997a), outdoor public spaces are very much adult- centred (Valentine, 1996b) and children are excluded from them, both indirectly and directly[29]. Following Foucault (1980), Giddings and Yarwood state that "the gaze of an authority figure, or the threat of being gazed upon, subjects are encouraged to behave according to expected norms of society" (2005: 103). In particular parents use the power of the gaze to 'keep an eye' on their children and to protect them from what they view as harmful (Valentine, 1996a, 1997a). Most of the work on control of spaces and 'geographies of the gaze' (Renzo, 2000) has been within urban contexts, such as the street or the mall, what Matthews (2000) terms the 'thirdspace' (after Soja, 1993). In contrast, there has been less work within rural spaces, with the significant exceptions of Owain Jones work in rural Wales (1995, 2000, 2001) and Valentine's work (1995, 2000). However, the clearly presented concept of the rural as 'other' to the urban has been questioned for a number of years (cf. Hoggan, 1988), which I return to at the end of this section.

Within small rural communities, the effectiveness of the gaze is magnified and is mirrored within my fieldnotes of island life, as reflected in Joanne's poem on page139. The small scale and perhaps, more intimate social relations create a 'rural goldfish bowl' (Leyshon, 2000). Giddings and Yarwood (2005) state that little children's from the adult gaze, which magnifies feelings of restriction and regulation. In 2004, Valentine published a book around her research on children's use of public space. She studied nine locations of which

[29] Valentine (1996) has argued that children are imagined and positioned in public spaces through parenting practices on the one hand, (child as angel), or 'hanging around' with friends on the other, (child as evil), regulatory regimes are employed, such as peer pressure policing, curfews (Collins and Kean, 2001) or legislation (Sibely, 2003) to enforce these ideas.

six were defined as urban metropolitan borough, one as a commuter village and two as rural towns, in Cheshire, Derbyshire, Greater Manchester and Yorkshire. Her researched showed that 45% of the parents surveyed were concerned about risk of abduction, while 35% were concerned about road traffic accidents. Within this research, Valentine also discovered that rural communities have a different type of stranger-danger concerns from urban communities, which stand in contrast to the rural idyllic image. These concerns evolved from the potential presence of passing walkers and strangers in nearby fields and woods but they did not arise within my research nor was surveillance confined to children on the island, as outlined below.

As discussed in Chapter Five, the development of the transport infrastructure on the islands has been a major agent of social change over the past century. The islands of Lewis and Harris are the most westerly islands in Scotland, and travel Lewis takes a two-and-half hours ferry ride from mainland of Scotland, or an hour-and-half from the north of the Isle of Skye and another hour's drive on the one road that traverses the spine of the isles of Harris and Lewis. Every ferry passenger is recorded, though more informal means of surveillance are employed and my movements were often relayed back to me by friends in the field who had heard through the bush telegraph where I had been and who I had been with. Anthropologists have been accused of clandestine observations though on many occasions being on the island was similar to being in Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon, a prison that was designed to maintain constant surveillance[30] both entire and individual (Foucault, 1986). And while I rarely encountered such a negative connotation, though I have met inhabitants who have[31], I am aware that I have been watched openly through telescopes as I walked the hills[32]. This surveillance made me conform to social norms and, in deference to the Free Church, I was careful of which activities I carried out on a Sunday.

The islands were not always portrayed as a safe haven and one respondent in the field told me about when a judge had sent a paedophile to the 'remote island of Harris' instead of prison (Scotsman, 12th August, 2002) on the mainland, and as I left the island I learned unofficially from the teachers of the Town school of the uncovering of a paedophile ring (Stornoway Gazette, 12th December 2003). However, the concept of stranger-danger did

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[30] This close surveillance allowed me to feel safe hitching around the island, which I would not have attempted on the mainland, I also slept in the hostel, with the door unlocked as I couldn't get the latch to work, and though I was often alone during the winter I slept soundly.

[31] If I decided to visit a friend by chance but he wasn't in, I had no need to leave a note, as his neighbour a mile away and on the side of the bay would phone to inform him as soon as he came back — a fact the friend found annoying

[32] The anthropologist Susan Parman describes the suicide of a young man in her ethnography of a small township on Lewis, who she implies was made a prisoner by the culture's demand to conform (1991).

not arise in any narrative during the fieldwork. Instead many participants were allowed a wide space to roam, as I experienced during the extension activities, where I was taken on walks from their homes, along Lochs, up the hills to admire the view over the sky and even down to an old rubbish skip to explore what other islanders had thrown away (Figure 6..20)

Figure 6.20

The child as active agent within rural spaces and wider social forces

Jones (2000:37), considers that some researchers may "over-emphasise the need or even ability of ordering forces to eradicate all pockets of disorder" and discussed how children in 'Allswell' still found opportunities for play in many small-scale settings. As discussed in depth in Chapter Two, young people/children are capable of negotiating and regulating spaces, both "active and creative in their social interaction and formation of identities" (Panellii 2000:110).[33] However, this work does not recognise the wider social forces that also impact on any individual's life (cf. Valentine, 2000), as also raised in these findings. Here, I return to Harper's critique of the second tacit agreement, which he argues underpins many studies of playing: play is presented as a liberating activity, often in respect to children's use of space. For example Punch (2000) explores how children in rural Bolivia "create their own playspaces away from parental control" (p56). Aitken (2001) has used play as an activity to argue for children's rights to access moral spaces, though more recently he views playing as a part of the daily activities of child labourers in Mexico (2007). Harper argues that although playing can be key to young people's abilities to secure rights to and control over space, this tells only half the story. Holloway and Valentine (2000) found in their research on the internet and children that the presence of multiple cultures

[33] 'Spaces are never produced in a singular or uniform way' (Valentine, 1996a: 213), adult hegemonies are frequently contested by children, and teenagers in particular, seeking to assert their own places and independence in public spaces.

and overlapping time/spaces highlighted children's agency and their power to both resist and ally themselves with adults, as well as the ways in which they are controlled by them[34]. Not all researchers view power discourses to be between adults and children and the use and control of public spaces are often contested between children of different genders and ages (Skelton, 2000; Tucker and Matthews, 2001; Tucker, 2003). Nairn *et al.*(2003) state that rural spaces are regulated by peer as well as adult behaviour. However, despite discussions around children's identities as diverse and children as passive agents, children's identities are still separated from adults. For example in Giddings and Yarwood's paper, they write:

> children's identities in rural places are fluid and rest on their ability to perform particular activities in space. In order to create opportunities to do this, negotiation, contest and sometimes, conflict occurs with their parents, other adults peers and other actors that enforce regulatory regimes in particular rural places." "This can feel restrictive to children, who often want to find places away from the adult gaze where they can express themselves and develop their own sense of identity (2005: 107)[35]

As discussed in Chapter Three, the concept of a homogeneous adult as 'other' is an underlying and unchallenged meta-narrative within many of these papers on the child within rural spaces. The approach of maintaining the dichotomy between child and the adult is only one way of viewing children's everyday lives, and in fact was not dominant in the research material in terms of control, in particular the role of the roads in their everyday lives. For example, in line with Holloway and Valentine's recognition of the ability of children to ally themselves with adults (2000), John, Mary, Kristina and James all chose photographs of cars to represent their mothers (Figure 6..21) and that was presented as liberating in nature, though these issues were also faced by other island inhabitants, as outlined below. A dominant agent of control that appeared within their research material was the road system within the island and the importance of movement within their everyday lives (see page 191).

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[34] Both James *et al* and Holloway and Valentine use of the dichotomy of the child versus the adult, is not replicated in this thesis

[35] There is also a focus on dominant social identities, such as for example, different children experience rural areas in different ways according to their age (Matthews *et al.*, 1998), gender (Jones, 1999), class (Corcoran, 2003) and race (Nairn *et al.*, 2003). In this research, the age differentiation was not noted as a six year old boy was free to wander further than a thirteen year old girl, though her restrictions was predominantly that as the eldest child in the single parent family she was expected to care for her siblings. Within the gender issues, two young girls frequently went to visit an old quarry alone where they spent the afternoon together, while one boy was restricted due to his autism. As mentioned earlier, the Hebriddean society has its own power relations, though class is not one of those distinctions.

Figure 6.21

Negotiating the islands

More than any other group, the Beach group rarely mentioned the tarmac roads as a form of transport, though the physical sites of some of their photographs were miles apart. However, through further discussions, and time on the island I discovered that getting to these locations without access to 'wheels', as I was told, was part of daily lives on the islands and family members, neighbours and people the participants knew would take them on the way to check the sheep or to visit family members. Moving around the islands, which has infrequent public transport, without a car was not only common to island inhabitants too young to drive, but also to many island households which have relatively low income and could afford transport or could not drive due to physical incapacity. This characteristic of rural life for households with low income is common across Britain (Countryside Report, 2000). However, in contrast to research on the exclusion of poor rural communities, in many rural communities on mainland Britain, there are other choices.

An informal network of transport exists on the island that transports people, news and shopping, sometimes in the mode of a relay team, as outlined earlier on page 187. Frequently when walking in Harris along the roads, exploring the island terrain people would stop to give me a lift, but when I waved them on saying, "Oh, I am just enjoying the walk", I was often given silent puzzled stares or as one crofter, in his ninetieth year, told me, "But why would you want to walk? You're mad, girl... If you want to walk I'll take you up to the moorlands (to check the sheep). For why would you want to walk along the

road?"[36] One significant difference between the islands and other rural research on the lack of transport in rural Britain (cf. Countryside Report, 2000), a widely recognised problem and is seen as excluding the poorer inhabitants, in particular young people who have access to few leisure facilities in rural areas (Jackson, 1999). However, in this research, the lack of transport was never raised as significant problem by neither participants nor respondents. Roads were continually seen as a positive development and somehow these roads were travelled, this maybe linked to the fact that while on the mainland roads have been in existence for over a century or more, in the island the presence of a roads is relatively recent event and roads are not something, as yet, that have been taken for granted (Figures 6.22 & 6.23).

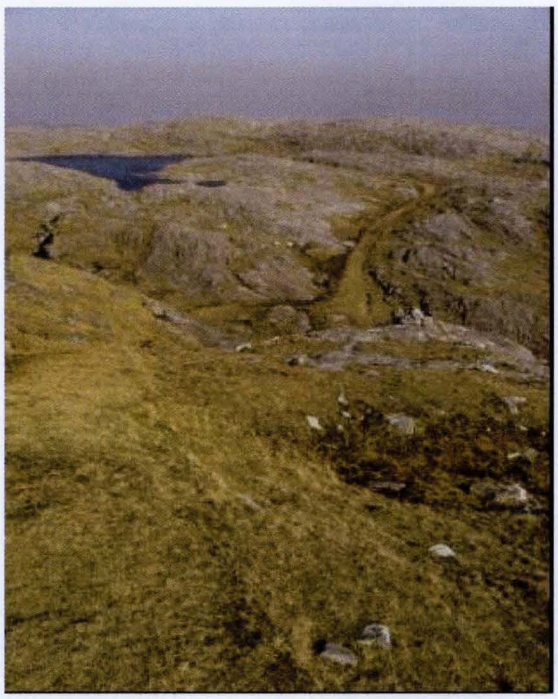

Figure 6.22 Old road system on the Isle of Harris.

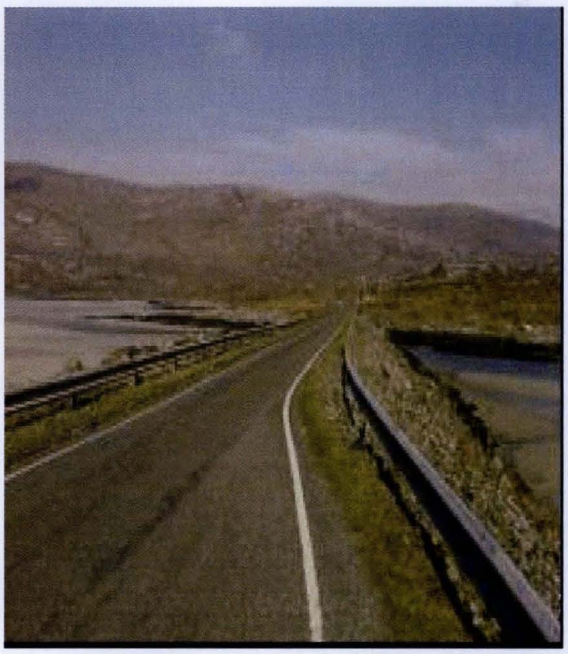

Figure 6.23 Modern road system on the Isle of Harris.

The nature of the rural and the materiality of the islands?

Researchers are increasingly blurring the distinctions between urban and rural space, with children living in village environments often seeking to gather around 'urban' landmarks, such as shops or streets (Matthews *et al.*, 2000a, b; Nairn *et al.*, 2003; Vanderbeck and Morse Dunkley, 2003). Conversely, children living in built-up areas may seek more

[36] However, this pattern of getting a lift easily did not always occur One week during the height of the tourist season, I had hitched a lift seven miles to visit a friend. On the way back it was getting dark and started to rain and despite three cars I recognised passing me no-one stopped and I had to walk the seven miles back. Later when I gently chastised one of the drivers, they said they hadn't recognised me in the dark and rain and anyway they never stopped to pick tourists up as they are all over the islands and if you stopped every time you'd never get anywhere.

'natural' spaces, such as parks, to meet in (Nairn *et al.*, 2003). Young people who reside in a village may actually have more social interaction in nearby urban environments than their home locality, especially if they attend school in a larger settlement. These relationships may be hindered by poor transport, which can equally prevent children living in urban environments from meeting their rural friends (Corcoran, 2003). As a result, researchers draw parallel experiences faced by children in rural and urban environments (Goodins and Horwood, 2005), confirming well-established thinking that social geographies in the two environments are not significantly different (Hoggart, 1988). Indeed, mass media, including the internet, means that children's worlds are increasingly shaped by spaces and ideas far beyond their locality (Valentine and Holloway, 2001). Social space is not a bounded entity, but should be conceptualised as a series of linkages between different places (Massey, 1994).

Research findings, as presented within this chapter, highlight that participants' /islanders' social spaces are not confined to the immediate physical environment and I also wish to highlight that there are several potential problems with the above research studies. First, the conclusion that rural children seek out built-up places was not replicated in this study and also assumes the concept of the homogeneous child. Second, most research projects carry out micro-level analysis, where the conclusion builds on the physical distance of a place from major settlements, etc., though each location relies on different infrastructure and is located at varying distances from major settlements. Valentine's work on public spaces (2004), as discussed below, draws on research in two 'rural' villages that lie close to major cities. The rural is a highly contested term since the social and physical infrastructure vary widely across Great Britain, and in this research, the Scottish islands differ significantly from research carried out, for example, in a village in 'rural' Hampshire or in 'rural' Wales. In particular, the islands of Lewis and Harris can only be accessed by boat, and as outlined in Chapter Five, the roads traverse a terrain of bog and stone. In this research, the materiality of a place proved to be an important part of a network of bodies, in particular as participants' research material focused on movement and travel. As outlined in Chapter Two, the materiality of landscape (rural) studies was criticised and rejected with the cultural turn, though interest in this issue has been increasing (cf. Lorimer, 2002). For example, agricultural activities have prevented leisure activities. However, these discussions are based on English feudal law and historical land activities that are not replicated in many parts of the Highlands and islands. In this research, findings are site specific and the physical place has been shown to matter to participants.

These research narratives highlight three important points within this thesis. The first point is that the physical land in controlling participants' everyday lives is not only restricted to individuals too young to drive. Second, island inhabitants are not just passive entities in how this physical terrain impacts on their lives. Participants and other island inhabitants were able to negotiate the land without their own transport and many participants were able to travel relatively far under their own volition. Similar to respondents in Valentine and Holloway's research (2000) participants in this thesis were also not passive recipients within the space around them, in this case how the physical terrain impacted on their everyday lives. In contrast to Valentine and Holloway's (2000) work participants' everyday spaces, as interpreted through their own research material, did not appear to be excessively controlled by increasing narratives of stranger-danger. Third participants' meanings of and interactions with land in their everyday lives are closely aligned with research within land/landscape as places of dwelling (Ingold, 1993), which I return to in the conclusions.

CHAPTER SEVEN
CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, I return to each of the three research questions, as outlined at the end of Chapter Two:

1. How do groups of 'children' in the Outer Hebrides, Scotland define 'land' in their everyday lives?
2. How do participants' meanings compare and contrast with the literature on current research into human relationships with everyday land/landscapes?
3. Do participatory methods designed specifically for children perpetuate the concept of child as 'other'?

I present my conclusions for the first two research questions that participant's meanings of land can be understood through two theories about a human's relationship with everyday land. First, Ingold's phenomenological concept of landscape as dwelling, that recognises the influence of past generations (walking the land, tending the sheep), and more 'modern' activities, (watching soap operas in the home). Second, Massey's spatial concept of a progressive sense of place that recognises the influence of wider social forces and explains everyday meanings of land inhabited by a Bengal tiger. A third research question, explored a controversial methodological question: is doing research with children different from doing research with adults? (Punch, 2000). This final issue aims to address a narrow readership problem within children's geographies and to persuade all researchers, interested in different citizens' voices, to no longer view the 'child' as 'other' to the adult and, therefore, 'outside mainstream social research'.

1. *How do groups of 'children' in the Outer Hebrides, Scotland define 'land' in their everyday lives?*

Participants' meanings of land were frequently linked to their everyday lives, in particular actions of doing, being and having. A sense of movement was dominant in most participants' meanings of land, such as going from home to school or to visit a family. Meanings were rarely linked to an object 'external' to their social lives, such as a tree, a road or an animal, and here I return to Highmore's quote on page 454.

> Everyday modernity begins to look like a patchwork of different times and spaces ... The everyday as poverty and oppression vies with the everyday as culturally rich and animated by festive forces. There is no comfort here for anyone wanting an 'object' simply to celebrate or condemn. (Highmore, 2002:174)

Meanings were untidy, open and embodied "a concept of place as a meeting place, the location of the intersections of particular bundles of activity spaces, of connections and interrelations, of influences and movements" (Hall, 1993). Participants' meanings of everyday land were encountered within different locations, chosen by participants themselves, which were porous in nature: the home, around the home, around the island and further afield (a progressive sense of space).

Within the home, participants' meanings focused less around the house as a physical building and more as home as an emotional space, within which families, including animals, lived and revolved around daily activities, such as watching soap operas, using the bedroom as a space and place to play quietly. Within the home, some representations of their family focused on their activities, such as watching TV or washing the dog, while others represented 'this is my family'. However, neither all the meanings of land as 'home' meant being inside, nor was home always a haven (James *et al.*, 1998). For one participant, one meaning of land was a tree she hid in to escape a difficult home life, and for another, one meaning was the grave of his father[1], who had died recently.

Within meanings of land in the home, family was also represented by humans and pets, though animals were rarely named unless they were pests or the sheep. Some representations of an animal represented the member of family, such as James' photographs of his father's tups, while other representations were less organic and more hybrid in nature (Whatmore, 2002), such as the photographs of cars that 'represented' mothers and other inhabitants who drove them around the island. This focus on movement was evident around the home and outside where discussions focused on more embodied practices, such as traversing the water-laden topography. Most significant was moving around the islands and the role of the roads in everyday lives. This movement away from the home became evident in asking the participants to revisit the sites of the photographs and the focus on that moment in time.

[1] This sentence reflects Gaelic sentence structure [I don't understand this footnote], which is often used when speaking English.

Meanings of land, while rooted in the same physical location, did not produce the same patterns and were diverse in nature. For each example of meanings of land presented in this chapter, there were always contradictions and no general pattern can be applied, except for the concept of land and identity that I turn to below. Participants' meanings of land are presented more as repetitions not generalisations – terms that Deleuze and Guttari (2002) are at pains to highlight are not the same.

Participants' own definition of land as identity and people

Some participants' meanings of land produced more unexpected definitions of land, such as Sheila who enjoyed being indoors with her family or watching soap operas. In contrast, Scotland's land, for purposes of tourism, is often presented as a 'land out of time', as an "enchanted fortress in a disenchanted world" (Rojek, 1993: 181). Scotland is claimed to be the last great European wilderness, which is presented as the antithesis of culture, as the quintessential escape area in a modern society. The 'wilderness' tag is a social construction (McCrone, 1997), as outlined in Chapter Five, since at the end of the 18th Century the Highlands and Islands were discovered as a scenic game park replete with 'nature' – and its game – salmon, deer and grouse. Such has been the reconstruction of the Highlands in particular that we find it impossible to 'see' them in any other way and in Womack's words have been "colonised by an empire of signs" (1989: 1).[2] The Highlands and Islands have always been invested with symbolism of being 'foreign' and exotic. By the end of the 18th Century the construction of modern tourist icons around wilderness were well-established and since then, in particular through the literary writing of Walter Scott in the early decades of the 19th Century, the Highlands especially became the focus for 're-discovery' of the wilderness. As McCrone states (1997) "guidebooks and travel memoirs highlighted three themes: the wild grandeur of the landscape, remoteness and peace, with a dash of romantic (preferably tragic) history". Denis Cosgrove (1994) calls these discourses 'terrains of power' where "nature, landscape and environment are semiotic signifiers, deeply embedded in the cultural constitution of individual European nations and integral to the distinctive identities of Europe's peoples".

Many respondents' and workshop participants' meanings of land did not uniformly represent these perceptions of Scotland's land, though some participants did focus on more 'aesthetic' meanings of land, such as the 'sunlight glinting on the waves', which I return to later. These distinct differences between commonly perceive notions of the islands' lands

[2] There has always been a distinction between the Lowlands and the Highlands, which shifts and is contentious in nature due to the different linguistic, economic and geographical boundaries.

raise the question of whether participants had focused upon a specific interest in their own lives and lost the focus of the project. To answer this question, I return to the methods and workshop process, as described in detail in Chapter Four. Here, participants were invited to define their own concept of land, and in line with critical and creative thinking, the project was based around these different definitions and each step led on from the previous. I also continually checked with participants that their work remained in line with the project objectives. Before beginning a new workshop, the previous workshop was reviewed and the land diagrams were in full view on the wall to remind each participant of the starting point of the project. However, while the objective remained the same, to explore their concept of land, this did not mean that their definitions could not change. As Amanda told me "You know when I started I thought that land as trees and stuff but the more you think about it it's a lot more than that, isn' it?". The important point to be drawn from the findings is that definitions of land are based upon participants' concepts within their everyday lives and did not begin from any specific academic meanings of land/landscape. I continue to present the conclusions on the first research question but now introduce how these meanings of land fit into current theories around land or landscape that link Ingold's landscape as dwelling, and Massey's concept of the progressive sense of place, as discussed in Chapter Six. Here I present a hybrid theory of land that recognises that the material, cultural and social are not autonomous worlds, but inter-twine and interact in all kinds of promiscuous combinations (cf. Thrift, 1996; Lorimer, 2001).

2. *How do participants' meanings compare and contrast with the literature on current research into human relationships with everyday land/landscapes?*

As outlined in Chapter Two, the concept of land or landscape was left open to participants to define as they wished. As Strauss reminds us, an object does not have an essence in itself: it "is dependent on how it is defined by the namer" (1559: 20). As such, participants' meanings of land were inextricably linked to a sense of identity since:

> "Depending on who we are ... and the biographical moment, we understand and engaged with the world (real and imagined) in different ways. Which bit of ourselves we bring to the encounter also depends on the context. And as neither place nor context nor self stays put, things are always in movement, always becoming." (Bender and Winder, 2001:8)

There are various approaches towards land and identity. Authors such as Mortlock (1973) and Cooper (1991, 1994) propose a link between a positive sense of self, others and the

environment. This separation of people from their land, it is proposed, fosters a longing to return to a natural environment (Bunce, 1994), which some extend to the proof that there is a biological attachment between human and nature (Wilson, 1993), sometimes labelled biophilia, where our attachment is genetic in nature. Other writers extend this human need to human identity, which remains rooted in connections within our 'sense of place', which is labelled 'topophilia' (Tuan, 1974b). Phenomenological work on 'rootedness' and 'sense of place' within cultural geography is influenced by the German philosopher Martin Heidegger and his notions of 'dwelling' and 'being in the world' (1993: 55). This notion of dwelling is linked to a sense of both identity and existing in the world and focuses on the interaction between humans and place, and the concept of 'place as experience' is proposed (Jackson & Penrose, 1993; Kahn, 1996; Basso, 1996). The findings in this research fit within the phenomenological approach towards land or landscape, though the concept of rootedness is problematic as it ignores the concept of wider social forces, as discussed below.

Phenomenological meanings of landscape

As outlined above, many participants' meanings of land were 'moving along familiar paths, winding memories and stories around places, people create a sense of self and 'belonging' " (Bender and Winder, 2001: 10). The methods introduced the use of sights, sound, smell and touch within explorations of land, though participants themselves continued to employ their different senses when describing their notebooks or works of art or when talking with each other or with me. For example, on the back of Jane's photograph she had written, "I can feel the wind blowing on my face and in the distance I can hear the trot of sheep coming down the road". Most discussions revolved around performances within everyday lives (Thrift, 1993). As discussed in Chapter Six, Section One, some participants also produced meanings of land as embodied practices, which they found difficult to articulate, such as their experiences of being surrounded by a starry night sky. The nature of these meanings suggests that mind and body are inseparable within that moment of time (Nash, 2000). These meanings of land are a form of 'stock-taking' (Bender and Winder, 2001) and reflect more recent phenomenological approaches of being-in-the-world attachment to place and landscape (cf. Tilley, 1994; Gow, 1995; Ingold, 1993). Experiences are ambulatory visions (Ingold, 1997) or, better still, ambulatory encounters (Bender and Winder, 2001). As inhabitants go about their business, things unfold along the way, come in and out of focus, change shape and take on new meanings. Ingold states that these experiences are "horizons, since they are relative to place and move as people move, they

do not cut the land into pieces. Hence they mark the limits of perception, but they do not enclose ..." (1997:26).

Participants' meanings of land also reflected the influence of past generations' meanings of land, through, for example, the fact that buildings also represented families, past or present, including neighbours', while old ruins for some participants represented memories of past generations and their own 'taskscapes' (Ingold, 1997). However, participants' meanings did not reflect the more historical moments on the island such as the former land raids monuments near the Hill group nor the land-buying ceremony for the Rainbow group. In contrast, Mackenzie (2006) describes the same land-buying ceremony, and the same moment and time, as a significant event in the island's history. I was unaware of the ceremony from either other island inhabitants or the school itself, until I was facilitating the art workshop, a few hours before the ceremony, and to the teacher's horror the Rainbow participants' clothes were splashed with paint during an energetic art session. Despite this incident I was still invited to the land ceremony by the head teacher. I found it strange that though in such a small community, where I was carrying out fieldwork and creating daily fieldnotes, I have no notes of any discussion about the land-buying ceremony, which raises the question: within whose island history is the land ceremony a significant event?

McKenzie has carried out a number of pieces of research on the isle of Harris that highlight the importance of land ownership and people's rootedness in their land. Based on a case study of the land buying, she argues that "in the creation of differential geographies of place, notions of land/territory and nature are re-drawn in complicated and contentious ways"(2006: 200). In her work she writes against the neoliberal project of enclosure to reverse past and present dispossession of people's land in the Highlands and Islands (cf. 1998; 2006). Similar arguments are presented in the work of Hunter (1976) and Devine (1994). The injustice of the past land clearances and the anomaly that seven percent of Scotland's inhabitants own seventy percent of the land (Wightman, 2000) should not be ignored. However, as Saunders reminds us, while silent voices can become more audible, there is a need to be wary of romanticising these voices – of turning them into victims, dissenters, purveyors of radical alternatives (Massey, 2000).

Some generational activities were replicated by participants such as maintaining the tatty patches or walking the land with fathers to check on the sheep, while others would have not existed in former generations, such as playing in the rubbish tip and exploring what people had thrown away in a modern society where materials don't decay and instead

rubbish stand as a form of graffiti on the islands (Fraser, 2000). Participants' meanings of land were recreated within the current society and meanings reflected both the past as a structural influence but also participants were active agents in reforming and reinterpreting these meanings. For example, James' interest in the sheep and his love of his family's island contrasted sharply with his dislike of football, which is such a common topic of conversation that the teacher told me: "if he doesn't like football he may have problems at the secondary school as he may not fit in" (Fieldnote 2 February 2002). Participants' meanings of land moved backwards and forwards between the details of everyday existence and wider social forces (cf. Sontag, 1983). For example, in the final workshop, two participants performed a self-penned heavy metal thrash song, on the guitar and drums, about the increasing pollution of the planet by humans. But both participants continued to discuss the importance of people and land on the islands within their everyday lives.

The recognition of the temporal influence of generations is not unique within phenomenological approaches towards places and landscape, though many present a structuralist approach where the current inhabitants are passive recipients of past knowledge (cf Gow, 1995)). In contrast, Ingold's notion of dwelling is built upon "knowledge that has [not] been communicated to me; it is knowledge I have built up for myself by following the same paths as my predecessors and under their direction. In short, the growth of knowledge in the life history of a person is a result not of information transmission but of guided rediscovery"(2005: 23). The "answer does not lie in the transmission of representations – or of what D'Andrade (1981: 179) calls " 'pass it along' type information" – which requires the "impossible precondition of a ready-made cognitive architecture" (2003: 24). Instead, he suggests that the contribution each generation makes to its successors amounts to an education of attention, "In the passage of human generations, each one contributes to the knowledgeability of the next not by handing down a corpus of disembodied, context-free information, but by setting up, through their activities, the environmental contexts within which successors develop their own embodied skills of perception and action" (Ingold, 2004: 4).

Progressive meanings of land: rooted and unrooted (generational time and wider space)[3]

Phenomenological conceptions of land, including those in Ingold's work, tend to focus on the notion of small-scale, familiar, rooted landscapes and ignore the influence of wider

[3] Many of these approaches, such as those of Basso and Field, focus on familiar places. However, meanings of land in this thesis were both familiar and unfamiliar and reflected a wider concept of the local place that extended both temporally and spatially.

spatial forces, as mirrored in participants' meanings of land, such as the presence of the Bengal tiger and the modern concept of trees. The concept of rootedness and landscape was outlined in Chapter One. For example, Malpas views the structure of the mind to be tied to locality and spatiality, and identities are intricately and essentially place-bound (1996: 194), while Kahn suggest that places "represent connections between people and their common place, individuals and their group, or sources of individual or shared identity, rooting them in the social and cultural soils" (1996: 194). Many authors discussing place and identity link the loss of 'rootedness' to a concept of 'homelessness'. Relph views home as where your roots are, a centre of safety and security, a field of care and point of orientation (1976). Some commentators view this concept of connection to land to be literary middle-class conceit (Woollcott, 1998; James, 2001) while others argue that mobility promotes an equally emphatic connection to a larger whole (Cuthbertson *et al.*, 1997). These authors believe that being in connection with different landscapes fosters a wider web of sense of place and creates a holistic notion of place.

Massey's concept of the progressive sense of place as outlined in Chapters Three and Six, adopts neither approach. In contrast to Cuthberton *et al.* (1997), her theories are not about the physical movement of place or land but recognise the influence of wider global forces upon our everyday life, such as Jack's understanding and interest in the Iraq war. While in regard to Relph's and Malpas' concept of rootedness, Massey's work is in direct opposition to this concept of 'belonging' as rooted in blood and soil. Cresswell highlights that fact that to be 'out of place' and to not belong is to be socially excluded from a place, which mirrors Gilroy's writing against the concept of Black identity in the United Kingdom. This concept of the impact of globalisation and the reaction against the rootedness of place or landscape is best presented in the work and words of Deleuze and Guttari who famously wrote, "We are tired of trees. We should stop believing in trees, roots and radicals. They've made us suffer too much" (1981: 15). Their criticisms were a reaction against rooted histories that have silenced the minority groups in this world, in particular the nomadic cultures, and, I would argue, reflect Hawthorne's rejection of landscape in the early 1920s due to connotations of belonging, blood and soil. As outlined in Chapter Five, the islands are built upon myths of land ownership and belonging.

Instead, Deleuze and Guttari offer the concept of the metaphor of rhizomes and the trope of Nomadology. And while their criticisms of the oppressive sense of belonging to a place (cf. Cresswell, 1997) is well argued, their critics highlight that just as they criticise the oppressive concept of rootedness in place, they also iron out important difference as "if we

are all in fundamentally similar ways always-already travellers in the same Postmodern universe "(Ang, 1994 cited in Cresswell, 1997: 235). Another dichotomy is presented by commentators who create an opposition between a rooted sense of belonging and the alienating forces of modernity (Bender and Winder, 2001); therefore Sheila's concept of land as soap operas would result in her 'not belonging to the land' (sound of the wind). However, as highlighted in this thesis "the forces of modernity may rework a landscape but also be reworked in response to a local sense of place, a particular way of being in the world" (Bender and Winder, 2001: 12). For example, participants' meanings of land presented environmental discourses around people being good for land and land being good for people. In essence, participants' research material held on overall generalisation that people are land and land is people. Each participant's meaning was linked to another person, or their own identity, highlighting that many participants positioned themselves as part of land, not disconnected from it, within their everyday lives.

Hybrid land as rooted and unrooted – local and global, material and social

Participants' meanings of land in this thesis both reflect and contract Deleuze's concept of the nomad. Participants were also travellers though more time-travellers as reflected in their movement between modern society and past generations' meanings. The contradiction comes from the fact that the materiality of land or place is rejected in his work and, as outlined earlier, the physical place mattered to participants. As outlined at the end of Chapter Six, three important points were raised. The first point is that the physical land in controlling participants' everyday lives is not only restricted to individuals too young to drive. Second, island inhabitants are not just passive entities in how this physical terrain impacts on their lives. Participants and other island inhabitants were able to negotiate the land without their own transport and many participants were able to travel relatively far under their own volition. Similarly to respondents in Valentine and Holloway's research (2000), participants in this thesis were also not passive recipients within the space around them; in this case participants were able to negotiate the physical terrain, despite the lack of apparent transport, within their everyday movements. In contrast to Valentine and Holloway's work, participants' everyday spaces, as interpreted through their own research material, did not appear to be excessively controlled by increasing narratives of stranger-danger. Third, participants' meanings of and interactions with land in their everyday lives are closely aligned with research within land/landscape as places of dwelling (cf Ingold, 1993).

Within participants' meanings of land, the local and the global matter, and participants were both rooted in land but unrooted in their ability to travel, and, finally, land was both material and social creating a hybrid concept of land, as discussed below.

Traditionally, the social sciences have tended to produce an artificial dualism between the social and materiality. As Ingold states:

> Understood as a realm of discourse, meaning and value inhabiting the collective consciousness, culture is conceived to hover over the material world but not to permeate it. In this view, in short, culture and materials *do not mix*; rather, culture wraps itself around the universe of material things, shaping and transforming their outward surfaces without ever penetrating their interiority. (2000: 53)

Instead of positioning humans over and against the material world, Ingold suggests a shift of perspective. Drawing on Merleau-Ponty, Ingold (2000a, 2000b) argues that the human body is not so much in space as belonging to space. Bodily practices are already oriented towards actions in the world (Merleau-Ponty, 1962: 142). They inhabit it from their birth onwards, they use it, and their capabilities (language, the ability to use tools and so forth) are products of this active use. To consider humans necessarily involves considering objects, and vice versa. In this sense, non-humans 'empower' humans and enable 'agency' (Latour, 1993, 2000; see also Michael, 2000; Whatmore, 2002). Cresswell (2003) and Michael (2000) argue that landscape as a 'way of seeing' continues an outworn distinction between humans and environments that precludes us from seeing the intimate, sensuous performances between humans and material 'affordances' (on the concept of 'affordances' see Gibson, 1977).

However, Ingold's concept of dwelling does not take account of the wider social forces and Massey's progressive sense of place is required to recognise this important influence on participants' meanings of land. These meanings of land link well to the concept of hybridity of land. The relationality between things and people in material worlds is made up of imaginations, cultural styles, feelings and emotions (Sheller, 2004). "In a culture which favours bricolage, simulation, performativity and acting-as-if, we have increasingly learned to calculate and play with this radical indeterminacy between the real, the not-so-real and the imaginary" (Pels *et al.*, 2002: 3).

I now continue to answer third research question, that is a methodological discussion that rejects adopting the label of child when designing participatory research methods.

However, I would like to highlight that in this research the role of wider social forces do impact on participants lives, though rather than define them by the label child, there is an alternative 'group' label that evolved from the research material as outlined below:

Discussion: Identity through Mannheim's generation continuity and change

As discussed at length in Chapter Three, I chose not to use the 'construction' of children in developing and carrying out the workshops. After detailed discussion with colleagues at the Norwegian Centre of Child Research (NOSEB), many of who have researched generations for a number of years, I first adopted Mannheim's concept of *Generation* (1965) as participants' meanings of land displayed the three general characteristics of a generation defined by him. First, their meanings were both socially and historically constructed, as outline above in their link with past island histories. Second, each individual was influenced, though not uniformly, by both local and global issues while remaining active in meaning-making, as outlined at the beginning of this chapter. Third, 'children' are not passive empty vessels of knowledge and their biological development does not automatically equate to their cultural development, which links back to the diversity of participants' meanings of land in relation to their peers and other islanders.

3. *Do participatory methods designed specifically for children perpetuate the concept of child as 'other'?*

As participatory methodologies have gained popularity and are increasingly adapted to carry out research with 'children', in Chapter Three I return to the methodological question: is doing research with children different from doing research with adults (Punch, 2000)? As a participatory researcher, I raised concerns around methods designed for 'children' that stamp a 'how-to-research' label upon a diverse group of individuals prior to entering the research space. Rather than continue the well-worn debate around the incompetent/competent/powerless child versus the competent all-powerful adult, I attempted a different approach that aimed to dissolve this dichotomy. I drew on hybrid theories of identities (Benhabib, 1992; Butler, 1990; Adams, 2006) that recognise identities as multiple and fluid, and present social identities as unhelpful guides in designing participatory methods, principally the mythical notion of the competent all-powerful adult (Lee, 2001). I presented the case that pre-labelling participants contradicts the bottom-up approach of participatory methodologies, particularly when Participation is understood as spatial practice (Kesby, 1999; Cornwall, 2000), and participants are invited into a research

space, where identities are performed (Thrift, 2000) and are, therefore, something we 'do' not 'have' (Butler, 1990).

Concluding comment: Children's voicing - still waiting to be heard?

I began this thesis with children's voice and I will now return to this issue. Within methodology, I argued to create a space for children not to be othered from adult methodology, though there is a difference between creating a space for children to be heard and for others to actually listen to what they are saying, as highlighted in the example of the Rio Summit in Chapter One. In this thesis I have presented participants' voices interpreted through my own worldview for others to read and hopefully build upon in their own research. However, within academia, research with 'children' still does not speak to the wider society (Horton and Kraftl, 2005). In this thesis, while I have argued that participants have the potential agency to negotiate the spaces that they live within, the questions raised are for an unknown future and I finish with one research question, that highlights the view that research like landscape and land is always untidy and unfinished and "goes on and on (and on and on)" (Horton and Kraftl, 2005: 12). I present this research question through a fieldnote entry, based upon numerous previous entries throughout my time on the island and formed into the following ethnographic narrative.

One day while I walked the coffin road, I met a walker. The man, in his mid-fifties, was an 'expert' on the island, as he told me, since he had been holidaying here for years. I rarely offer to talk about my research topic but the conversation led that way. As he began to talk we entered a pattern of conversation I knew well. I was asked why I was on the island, and I outlined the artist-in-residence project. As usual, I was not asked what the 'children's' meanings were but I was told what they would tell me. They would talk about the croft, the animals and the land. [Occasionally I was told that island children are no different from mainland children, though, as outlined earlier, participants moved easily between the traditional and modern worlds.] I was then given a history lesson on the clearances and the islanders' love of their land (though on other occasions I'm told the opposite – that islanders do not appreciate their beautiful island). The monologue usually also includes the speaker's sadness at the death of Gaelic, or conversely articulates the belief that the modern world has no need for Gaelic. Usually the individual reminisces about how life has changed and traditions are being lost, though solutions are offered in

terms of boosting the island's economy through tourism.[4] In this particular case, his final comments were on problems with old cars and trucks littering the island, which did not help the tourist industry (Macdonald,2002). I was slowly switching off from a conversation I had heard many times, as I smiled and nodded politely. As my mind wandered, wondering why people never appeared interested in the participants', the children of the island or the research material, suddenly the realisation hit me that a pattern of thinking was emerging. This was not from within participants' research material but exclusively from my wider fieldnotes, and highlighted the fact that despite the years of fieldwork and the effort given by both participants and myself in developing this research, that there was perhaps nobody outside of researchers listening or interested in 'children's voices.'

This observation raises a further research question:

1. Will the prominent myths of the Outer Hebrides held by visitors, perpetuated by the tourist board, and by some local inhabitants, allow participants' diverse meanings of land to flourish and provide a platform for these meanings both now and in the future?

Original contribution and research implications

This thesis has made a number of original contributions, which can be presented within research as bricolage, as outlined in Chapter One.

As a theoretical bricoleur, I have attempted to explain participants' meanings of everyday land through building on Ingold's concept of dwelling as landscape and also Massey's progressive sense of place. This approach is new and still in the development stage. From a methodological perspective, I have argued for participatory methodologies that merge the dichotomy of child versus adult within the participatory workshops. This work has been developed into a peer-reviewed paper (Thomson, 2007). However, in recognition of wider social forces, participants are understood as part of a similar generation within Mannheim's concept of generation.

[4] The locals are frequently criticised for their lack of understanding of how to develop this industry, reminding me of Thompson's criticisms of previous generations inability to developing the fishing trade (see page 207).

As a political bricoleur I add an original piece of research to the on-going discussions around the political aspects of land within Scotland. This work adds to current research within an under-researched part of the Highlands and Island, in particular with inhabitants' everyday lives, regardless of their age or background. This research contrasts sharply with Mackenzie's work (2004,a, 2004b; 2006a; 2006c) on the political context of land ownership, though it does not contradict her excellent research, only provide a different view of the islanders' lives.

Finally, not all research needs to develop clear cut research implications. However, this thesis calls for other researchers who work with children to rethink their methods and not exclude the 'child' from mainstream social research. In addition, these conclusions around meanings of land also seeks to question the concept of land as belonging through the iconic concepts of Scotland, such as the heather, the mountains and the Land as 'blood and soil' that can be increasingly noted in discussions around an independent Scotland (McCrone, 1997)

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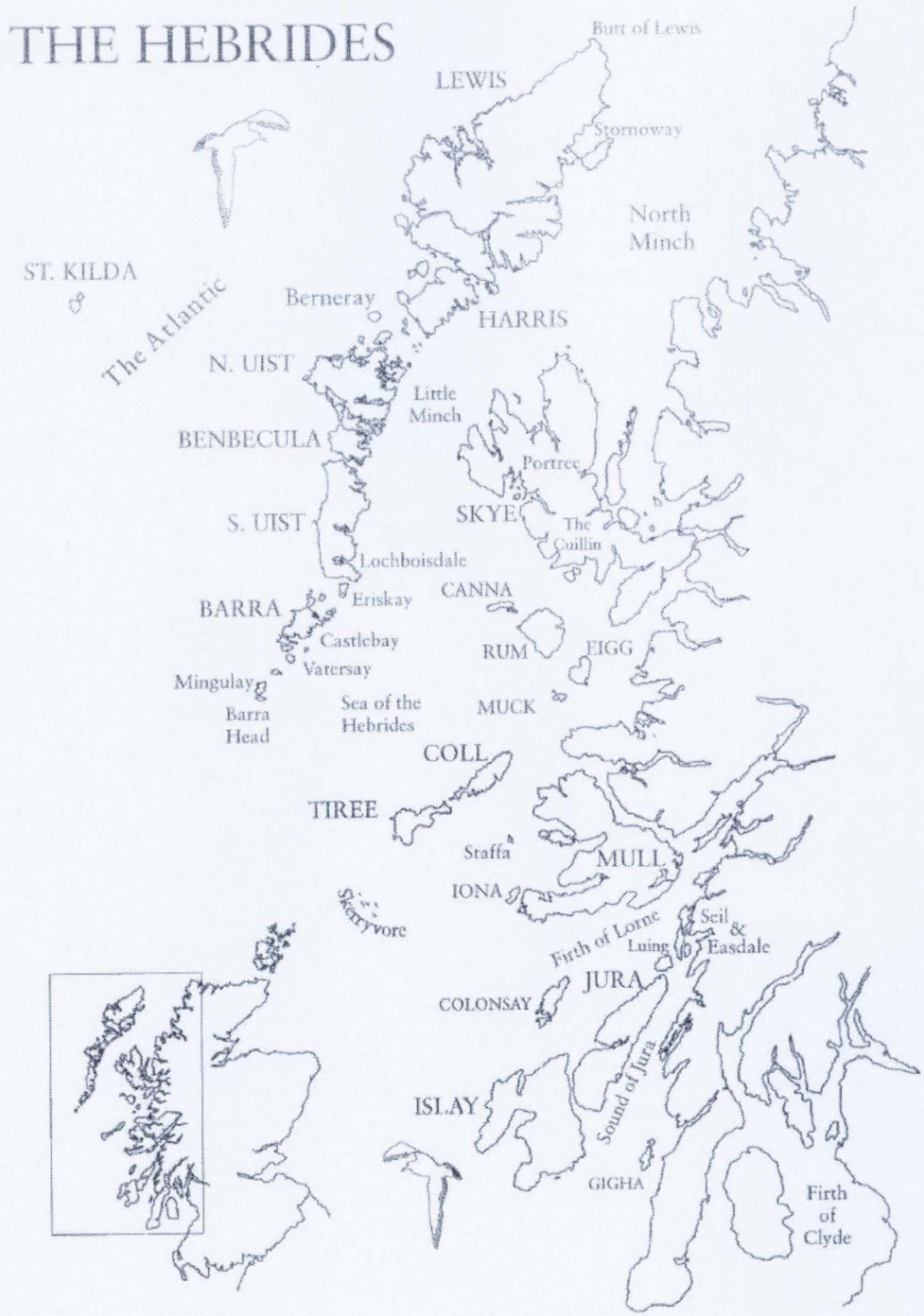
APPENDICES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Castlebay
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Vatersay
Mingulay
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onetree

What is the onetree project?

onetree explores the true value of a single tree. One large oak tree was divided amongst 75 British artists and makers, who each worked with their piece of the tree to create something unique for the onetree exhibition. The result is a treasure-trove of artworks, objects and ideas.

About the onetree oak.

The onetree oak, which originated from Tatton Park in Cheshire, was felled in November 1998. The tree was approximately 170 years old, with a trunk almost one metre across, but was suffering from die-back, a disease that has affected many British oaks in recent years. The entire tree from root ball to bark and sawdust was used in the onetree project.

For more information about the onetree project contact

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mail@onetree.org.uk.

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Woodland Heritage.
and The Worshipful Company of Furniture Makers.

Photography by Robert Walker
Text written by Jane Brake
Layout by John Rooney at Oakland.

onetree is a non-profitmaking company limited by guarantee.

Cover
Acorn hunter

discover the true value of a tree

Overview of the Steps within each Workshop

Workshop 1 was divided into six steps.

1. The warmer involved all the participants and myself standing in a circle. Involved the participants shaking away their troubles.

2. This step aims to **build confidence** and **introduce the idea of an 'artist-in-residence'. There are 3 activities.**

2.1 *'we can never be wrong'.* This phrase is introduced as being the most important 'thing about being an artist-in-residence'.

2.2 Using 3 large pictures by the modern artists, Kandinsky, Matisse and Klee, *we brainstorm ideas around the question 'what is art?'.* We discuss what the paintings are about, what they see what, the artist was interested in, which materials he used[1]. Do they like them? [bringing back in the idea that as artists *we can never be wrong*]. This activity reinforced their right to an opinion and also prepared for the next activity

2.3 Using photo-cards, developed by Am Lanntair, the art gallery in Stornoway, as part of an art exhibition, the participants had to match a photo representing the artist's inspiration with a photo of their final artwork. The overall concept presented was 'Idea + Inspiration = artwork'. (see appendix G)

3. This step aims to **open up all five senses** and introduce them into exploring their local environment. **There are 3 activities.**

3.1 In circle, the group took off their shoes and were led into an activity of walking around talking to their feet, hands, nose, mouth and finally eyes – telling each sense what they had felt, seen, smelt, tasted and seen over the past week.

3.2 In a circle, each participant chose a word picture from their past week – some volunteered their word picture verbally – then each participant clapped out the rhythm of their own word picture. [in the larger groups we brainstormed word pictures onto the board].

3.3 Each participant is given an A4 piece of paper divided into three sections. [see appendix ?] – they are invited to go outside, explore and complete the sheet using word pictures or drawings if they prefer. With two groups we used their immediate playgrounds which are surrounded by spectacular scenery while with one group I has time to go to a nearby beach.[see photo]

4. This step is the **crux of the first workshop** in terms of **data collection.** The **participants** are invited to **'define' land** – from their perspective. The group definition sets the, albeit flexible, parameters for 'what' the participants will explore in their concept of 'land'. However, the aim is not to collect a majority decision but to uphold the ideal of *'we can never be wrong'* and if only one participant defines 'something' as land – then it is held to be just as important if the whole group agree upon 'something'.

The participants in groups or individually – they decide – brainstormed their definition of 'land' onto A4/A3 pieces of paper. The two larger groups presented their work to the rest of the class while the smaller group informally discussed the diagrams as they worked.

5. Each participant was given a **disposable camera** [27 exps] to use over the week in preparation for workshop 2.

6. the final step was completed by myself. **I** took the participant's diagrams and **made a wall display for their diagrams**, which was placed on their classroom wall or in the school entrance.

[1] I will use a female painter next time –but difficult to get prints that I can afford!

Workshop 2 was divided into four steps.

Step 1 was designed to act as **a warmer** and a **reminder of Workshop 1.**

The two **smaller groups** had the following activity. Two A3 pieces of paper were taped onto the wall. In the middle of each paper was a word. One with 'good' the other with 'bad'. In two groups, the participants were asked to brainstorm the **good and bad points of 'land'** based on their discussions in workshop 1. The participants themselves created a competition using time and memory to add interest, retracing their steps outside to remind themselves of their work. This activity was videoed and the participants after explained the diagram to the 'TV cameras'.[2]

The **larger group** did this activity as part of workshop 1 and presented their work. This group set up a **role-play**. Each group picked a celebrity who was, fictionally, visiting Lewis and was to be interviewed on local TV about their perceptions of Lewis and its 'land'. Each group had time to prepare before setting up the interview and filming it for 'local TV'. The rest of the class watched the 'interview' then were allowed ten yes/no questions to guess who the celebrity was.

2. Before giving the participants their photos, the **work of Hamish Fulton**[3] was introduced to the group. The essence of his work is ***'an object cannot compete with an experience'.*** This phrase embodies the concept behind the workshops - to recreate the land that we experience everyday, using as many senses as possible. This activity is the foundation work for revisiting the places/scenes, represented by the photos chosen for the next activity.

3. **Participants created a photo book from** their **photos**. First they had to choose 6 photos, from the roll of 27 that they thought were important to them. Some choose 7-8 as they 'just couldn't decide!'. Each photo was glued onto an A5 coloured card. Their own photo was glued to an A5 metallic card [they choose the colour]. The cards were joined together by a tag joiner, which allowed them to flick through the photos. [4]

4. Before finishing we discussed what **art materials** the participants wanted in the **final workshop**.

[During the week the participants revisited the site of the photos and made notes/ drawings or collected 'things']

Workshop 3

This workshop was an art workshop. The participants set up the workshop themselves from the beginning. Organising the groups, the working space, and the materials. Based upon their notebooks, and work from previous workshops, participants were invited to produce a piece of art. During two hours, or a morning, the participants painted or drew.

[2] This activity was instigated by the Loch group. In the pilot participants also took the workshops into the realm of 'play' organized by themselves.
[3] Fulton's work does not try to recreate the whole but a partial memory of his walking experiences as he believes life is too complex and rich, and our memories are too limiting, to rebuild 'something' as experienced.
[4] The idea came from watching a film where an autistic participant had a photo notebook of his family/home/ school.. It was used to remind him of his 'world' and also as a security measure incase he became lost.

Letter of permission to parent/guardian to record co-researchers **Appendix D**

[The letter was printed on Institute of Education's headed paper.]

Dear x

Re: Art workshops at the Highland School, Loch Carry – recording permission

I am writing to inform you that I will be carrying out workshops with your child at Highland Primary School, during September. The workshops revolve around the theme of 'land' and involve the children recording their work using camcorders and tape recorders. Due to legislation, and to protect the privacy of your child, I require your permission to record their work. The procedure also ensures that in any published work, of which you will be informed, the children's voices remain anonymous.

I would be very grateful if you could sign the attached form, and return it to the school by Monday X September.

If you require any more information on the project then please contact me via the school or at the email address

Yours faithfully

Fionagh Thomson

I give my permission to allow my child to be recorded during workshops held at Higland primary school , Loch Carry from 5th September until 19th September; on the condition that my child's name is not recorded in any published materials, without prior consent

Signature..... Date.....

Game in workshop 1 [Artist + inspiration = work of art]

Participants have to match the photo of an artist's inspiration with their final work of art.

[*there were 10 sets of cards – below are 6 sets already matched*]